

**INDO - RUSSIAN RELATIONS (1991 - 2008):**

**A MULTI - DIMENSIONAL STUDY**

**A Thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the award of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**IN**

**POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**BY**

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**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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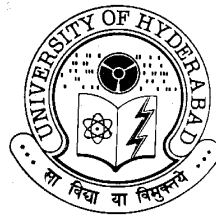
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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled “Indo-Russian Relations (1991-2008) : A multi-Dimensional Study” submitted to the University of Hyderabad in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science is a bonafide record of original research work done by me under the supervision and guidance of Professor Mohd. Moazzam Ali and the thesis has not been submitted to any other University or Institution for the award of any degree.

Date: 30-06-2009

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## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “Indo-Russian Relations (1991-2008) : A multi-Dimensional Study” submitted to the University of Hyderabad in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science is a bonafide record of original research work done by Mr. Niranjana Mohapatra during the period of his study in the Department of Political Science, University of Hyderabad, under my supervision and guidance and that the thesis has not been submitted to any other University or Institution for the award of any degree.

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**Dedicated to the memory  
of my father Shri Khageswar Mohapatra who always  
taught me that nothing is predestined  
and the obstacles of your past can become the gateways  
that lead to new beginnings.**

## **PREFACE**

This work is an endeavour to make an analytical study of the “The Indo-Russian Relations (1991-2008): A Multi-Dimensional Study”. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, which marked the end of Cold War, a new strategic partnership began to develop between India and Russia. This research work, inter alia, also explains the relations of the strategic partnership, military relationships and economic cooperation between India and Russia. This thesis also discusses why the strategic partnership has taken off, how India and Russia benefit from this strategic partnership, and potential problems that may emerged in this strategic partnership. In between 1991-2008, there have been emergences of a number of dimensions in Indo-Russian relations.

But in this thesis, we have sought to focus on four dimensions:

1. Indo-Soviet Relations (1947-1991): A Historical Background.
2. Strategic Dimensions Indo-Russian Relations (1991-2008)
3. Military Dimensions of Indo-Russian Relations (1991-2008)
4. Economic Dimensions of Indo-Russian Relations (1991-2008)

In the past more than one decade (1991-2008), India and Russia have moved away from the misperceptions of the Cold War that prevented a strong strategic partnership between the two countries. Instead, there has been an emphasis on common security interest, both short-term as well as long-term encompassing future concerns. These interests include emergence of a multipolar world, a possible reformation of UNO through expansion of Security Council, demilitarization of Indian Ocean and countering of terrorism.

So far as the methodology of the study is concerned, it follows historical and analytical method in examining the “Indo-Russian relations (1991-2008): A Multi-Dimensional Study” and evaluates the role of India and Russia in facilitating future development of this strategic, military and economic dimensions. The source of data can be categorized as primary, secondary and tertiary sources. The primary data includes the documents signed between India and Russia, joint statements of the Russian President and Prime Minister of India, respective countries government’s reports on bilateral agreements etc. The secondary sources include literature on the subject concerned and associated and collateral aspects of the subject and published research materials. The tertiary data encompasses articles in various journals, magazines, periodicals, websites, and news paper clippings etc.

This study comprises six chapters, which are elaborated below.

Chapter: I deals with a theoretical framework of foreign policy in international relations. It includes conceptualization of the term foreign policy in the context of Indo-Russian strategic, military and economic relations. For the operationalization objective, the broad definition of foreign policy has been taken into account.

Chapter: II deals with of the historical background of the Indo-Soviet strategic, military and economic relations. It seeks to highlight the past common strategic, economic and military interests; common problems areas and initiatives by both the countries. It also covers the attempts made to achieve the mutual interests through bilateral cooperation.

Chapter: III elaborates the management of the strategic relations between India and Russia in the post-Soviet era. The common emerging interests of both the countries,

common problems faced by them and common strategy they worked out etc, are examined.

Chapter: IV specifically examines the expanding military cooperation between India and Russia. The military relations between India and Russia have been shaped and reshaped within the broader parameters of the international politics. The same are examined in this chapter.

Chapter: V deals with the economic relations between India and Russia more specifically their bilateral trade.

The concluding chapter, besides summarizing this study, attempts an over all assessment of the Indo-Russian Relations during 1991-2008. This chapter summarizing the major findings of the work done.

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## **Chapter : I**

### **The Significance of Foreign Policy in International Relations**

International Relations represent the study of international behaviour pattern of states. Its central interests are to analyze the action and interaction of states in relation to one another. International behaviour of states is substantially a reflection of the ends and means pursued by them with regard to the outside world. These goals and means are collectively described as the foreign policy of a state. The foreign policy of a state is that part of its policies which relate to the external environment. Within the limitations of strengths and the realities of the external environment, each state decides what course it will pursue in world affairs. Realistically considered, foreign policies largely rest upon the perception of national interests. They have as their rationale the achievement of certain defined or generalized objectives in world affairs. Seen in this light, foreign policy can be thought of as the key element in the flow process by which a state translates its broadly conceived goals, objectives, and interests into concrete courses of action and policies.

In modern times no state can avoid involvement in the international sphere. This involvement must be systematic and based on some well defined principles. The principles and the purpose of a state are broadly reflected in the foreign policy. The importance of the foreign policy has been highlighted by scholars in various ways. According to one scholar, a state without a foreign policy is like a ship without radar which drifts aimlessly without any direction propelled by the sweep of events. The framing of foreign policy is a necessary activity of the modern state. It arises from the circumstances; as Lenin made remarked that a state is not an isolated island but a

member of a society of states, participation in which is inescapable<sup>1</sup>. Secondly, in this society political power is not centralized but distributed among the states in unequal measure. While foreign policy resembles any other state activity like maintaining educational or medical services or upholding law and order, it differs from these examples in that the state has only very imperfect control over the world society in which it lives.

Foreign policy involves both decisions and actions i.e., policies. These decisions and actions involve to some appreciable extent relations between one state and others. Foreign policy is essentially a matter of saying what a state is going to do. Through it, every state decides what course it will pursue in world affairs within the limits of its strength and the realities of the external environment. Foreign policy, therefore, confers a sense of direction to a state. It provides adequate instruments for the convenient journey towards this direction. It creates a sense of purpose as well as a confidence to achieve that purpose. In that context, it acts as an indispensable equipment of every state in world affairs. As professor Taylor rightly observes “foreign policy of a sort will go on so long as there are sovereign states”<sup>2</sup>. Foreign policy is a country’s way of dealing with its external environment. It represents the substance of foreign relations of a state.

The concept of foreign policy may be defined both broadly and narrowly. Broadly, it includes the objectives, plans, and actions taken by a state relative to its external relationships. As every state has several objectives like political, economic, military, ideological or cultural, it pursues a cluster of policies. That is why it has been

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<sup>1</sup> See V.I. Lenin as quoted by F.S. Northedge, ed., in *The Foreign Policies of the Powers*, (Faber & Faber Ltd., London, 1968), p. 9

<sup>2</sup> See Prof. Taylor as quoted by Raghbir Chakravarti, in *International Relations*, (The World Press Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta, 1970), p.228.

suggested that one should speak of foreign policies rather than a foreign policy. But foreign policy and foreign policies have completely different meanings. As Lerche, Jr., and Said point out “probably the best way to avoid confusion is to keep in mind that foreign policy (singular) is usually phrased in terms of goals, whereas foreign policies (plural) draw their relevance from objectives”<sup>3</sup>. However, a broad definition of foreign policy includes three specific dimensions i.e., goals or objectives, policy plans and actual actions undertaken by a state to regulate its external relations. But a narrow definition exclusively emphasizes the action aspect of foreign policy. In this sense, it refers to the actions (including words) of government officials to influence human behaviour beyond the jurisdiction of their own state. Therefore, foreign policy primarily refers to a course of action. Padelford and Lincoln maintain that “foreign policy is the key element in the process by which a state translates its broadly conceived goals and interests into concrete courses of action to attain those objectives and preserve its interests”<sup>4</sup>. This aspect of the priority of actions over objectives in a technical definition of foreign policy has been repeatedly emphasized again by Charles Burton Marshall. He observes the sum of the foreign policy is the sum not of things we should like to achieve but of the things we do or are going to set about doing in the world. He argues that “foreign policy of a state takes form in the course of action undertaken by authority of the state and intended to affect situations beyond the span of its jurisdiction”<sup>5</sup>. But he emphasizes simultaneously that the term action should not be narrowly construed. In this field, observes Marshall, “utterance is sometimes a form of action and pronouncements are deeds when they convey meaning about things

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<sup>3</sup> See Lerche, Jr. & Said as quoted by Raghbir Chakravarti, Note 2, p. 228.

<sup>4</sup> See Padelford & Lincoln as quoted by Raghbir Chakravarti, Note 2, p. 228.

<sup>5</sup> See Charles Burton Marshall as quoted by Raghbir Chakravarti, Note 2, p. 229.

intended to be done rather than merely expressing abstractions and moralizations”<sup>6</sup>. There are two major elements in this definition; first, foreign policy is generated in action. Second, the things acted upon in foreign policy are things beyond the jurisdiction of a state, i.e., beyond its direct control. He is convinced that objectives are of lesser importance than actual action. He points out that one could no more describe a nation’s foreign policy in terms solely of objectives than one could write a man’s biography in terms of his new year’s resolutions. Foreign policy consists of what a nation does in the world not what it yearns for or aspires to<sup>7</sup>. Foreign policy has to be analyzed from actual behaviour pattern of states rather than exclusively from declared objectives or policy plans. Its object is to influence events or situations beyond the state boundary.

Foreign policy can be described as the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (i.e. a state) in international relations. According to Roscoe Pound, “domestic policy is social control through law and foreign policy is the use of political influence in order to induce other states to exercise their law making power in a manner desired by the state concerned”<sup>8</sup>. According to H.J. Morgenthau’s realist theory, foreign policy has two basic principles. Firstly, it is used as a lever to secure national interests, (whatever the interests might be) and secondly, foreign policy has to be so framed that commitments are equal to the capacity for fulfilling them<sup>9</sup>. Charles Hermann calls foreign policy a “neglected concept”. He asserts that this neglect has been one of the most serious obstacles to providing more adequate and comprehensive explanations of foreign policy. Hermann thinks that part of the reason

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> See Roscoe Pound as quoted by F.S. Northedge, Note 1, p. 9

<sup>9</sup> See H.J. Morgenthau as quoted by A. Appadorai, in *Essays in Politics and International Relations*, (Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1969), p. 168.

for this neglect is that most people dealing with the subject have felt confident that they knew what foreign policy was. In other words we know it when we see it. Ultimately, Hermann defines foreign policy as “the discrete purposeful action that results from the political level decision of an individual or group of individuals. It is the observable artifact of a political level decision. It is not the decision, but a product of the decision”<sup>10</sup>. Hermann defines foreign policy as the behavior of states. Hermann rejects the idea that the study of foreign policy is the study of policy, but his is a minority view. Bruce Russett, Harvey Starr, and David Kinsella take an opposite and broader view. They think of a policy as a programme that serves as a guide to behavior intended to realize the goals an organization has set for itself. Foreign policy is thus a guide to actions taken beyond the boundaries of the state to further the goals of the state. Although some scholars define foreign policy as a programme or statement of goals, they also stress that the study of foreign policy must involve study of both the “formulation and implementation” of policy<sup>11</sup>. Deborah Garner takes foreign policy study further when she defines it as “the intentions, statements, and actions of an actor often, but not always, a state directed towards the external world and the response of other actors to these intentions, statements and actions”<sup>12</sup>. Other actors such as international cause groups, businesses, religions, and so forth in the international system formulate guidelines and goals that direct their actions toward other international actors.

George Modelski defines foreign policy as “the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behaviour of other states and for adjusting their own

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<sup>10</sup> See Charles Hermann as quoted by Laura Neack, in *The New Foreign Policy: U.S. and Comparative Foreign Policy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC, Lanham), p. 25

<sup>11</sup> See Bruce Russett, Harvey Starr & David Kinsella as quoted by Laura Neack, Note 10, p. 26.

<sup>12</sup> See Deborah Garner as quoted by Laura Neack, Note 10, p. 26

activities to the international environment”<sup>13</sup>. According to Mahendra Kumar, foreign policy should regulate and not only change the behaviour of other states. Therefore, he modifies Modelski’s definition of foreign policy to include within its range all activities of a state to regulate the behaviour of other states, either through change or status quo, in order to ensure the maximum service of its interest. He further defines foreign policy “as a thought out course of action for achieving objectives in foreign relations as dictated by the ideology of national interests”<sup>14</sup>. Felix Gross introduced another dimension by holding that even a decision that has no relations with a state is also a foreign policy or, in other words, not to have definite foreign policy is also a foreign policy<sup>15</sup>. In this way, foreign policy has both positive and negative dimensions. It is positive when it aims at adjusting the behaviour of other states by changing it and negative when it endeavours for such an adjustment by not altering that behaviour. Prof. F.S. Northedge says that foreign policy implies “the use of political influence in order to induce other states to exercise their law making power in a manner desired by the state concerned, it is an interaction between forces originating outside the country’s borders and those working within them”<sup>16</sup>. Hume Gibson defines foreign policy as “a well rounded comprehensive plan based on knowledge and experience for conducting the business of government with the rest of the world. It is aimed at promoting and protecting the interests of the nations. This calls for a clear understanding of what those interests are and how far we hope to go with the means at

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<sup>13</sup> See George Modelski, *A Theory of Foreign policy*, (Pall Mall, London, 1962), p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> See Mahendra Kumar, *Theoretical Aspects of International Politics*, (Shival Lal Agarwala & Company, Agra, 1993), p. 322.

<sup>15</sup> See Felix Gross as quoted by Mahendra Kumar, Note 14, p. 322.

<sup>16</sup> See Prof. F.S. Northedge as quoted by Norman J. Padelford & George A. Lincoln, in *The Dynamic of International Politics*, (The Macmillian Company, New York, 1962), p. 195.

our disposal. Anything less than this falls short of being a foreign policy<sup>17</sup>. A perusal of the above definitions of foreign policy shows that scholars have laid emphasis either on the plan of action or policy as executed. However, they all agree that foreign policy is concerned with the behaviour of a state towards other states.

According to Lerche and Said, normally foreign policy includes three elements. These are (1) formulation of the objective in the most precise terms possible; (2) the nature of the action to be undertaken, stated with sufficient clarity to guide and direct the state's other officials; and (3) the forms and perhaps the amounts of national power to be applied in pursuit of the objective. Mahendra Kumar describes four components of foreign policy<sup>18</sup>. They are (a) policy makers, (b) interest and objectives, (c) principles of foreign policy, and (d) means of foreign policy. According to Jangam, foreign policy is the policy of a nation towards other nations and generally it involves four factors.<sup>19</sup> (1) principles underlying foreign policy, (2) problems faced by the nation, (3) the particular way of making policy including the role of foreign policy makers; and (4) the products or results of foreign policy. The above description renders the concept of foreign policy clearer. A foreign policy can, therefore, be defined at this stage of our discussion as a thought out course of action for achieving objectives in foreign relations as dictated by the ideology of national interests.

Foreign policy objectives can be classified into various pairs of contrasting objectives. Arnold Wolfers has distinguished for instance, between possession goals and milieu goals<sup>20</sup>. By the former he understands those goals which a foreign policy seeks to achieve in order to preserve its possessions like a stretch of territory or a

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<sup>17</sup> See Hume Gibson, *The Road to Foreign Policy*, (Doubleday Doran & Company Inc, New York, 1944), p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> See Mahendra Kumar, Note 14, p. 325.

<sup>19</sup> See R.T. Jangam, *An Outline of International Politics*, (Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1970), p. 47.

<sup>20</sup> See Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics*, (The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1962), pp. 67-80.

membership of some world organization whereas by the latter he means those goals which nations pursue in order to shape favourable conditions beyond their national boundaries. Peace is an example of a milieu goal of national policy. Similarly, efforts to promote international law and encourage international organizations are actually the efforts to create a milieu in which nations can conduct foreign relations favourably. In practice, however, milieu goals may only be the means for the pursuit of possession goals. Some writers prefer the expression “international goals” to milieu goals.

The common objectives of the foreign policy of all nations are (1) maintaining the integrity of the state, (2) promoting economic interests, (3) providing for national security, (4) protecting national prestige and developing national power and (5) maintaining world order. These can be supplemented by specific objectives according to the peculiar problems, needs and conditions of the particular country. According to H. J. Morgenthau, the foreign policy represents an instrument at the disposition of the state for safeguarding the national interests (externally) by means of power (overt and covert)<sup>21</sup>. In this sense, the maximization of power for safeguarding the national interests is an inherent goal of any state’s foreign policy. He arrives at such an understanding of foreign policy by emphasizing the realism of power politics, whose objective laws “have their roots in human nature”<sup>22</sup>.

As a field of study, foreign policy analysis is relatively new, commencing more or less in the mid 1960s<sup>23</sup>. There were of course, scholars who studied foreign policy before this time, but their pursuit was one of many within the broader study of international politics. The early study of foreign policy, like the study of international

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<sup>21</sup> See Morgenthau as quoted by Imtiaz Ahmed, in *State and Foreign Policy: India’s Role in South Asia*, (Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1993), p. 41.

<sup>22</sup> See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, (Kalyani Publishers, New Delhi, 1995), pp.4-5.

<sup>23</sup> See Laura Neack, Note 10, p. 26.

relations and comparative politics, reflected academic debates over the proper ways of knowing that dominated social science research in the 1950s and 1960s. Foreign policy study arose as a bridge between international relations and comparative politics<sup>24</sup>. To understand the construction of foreign policy study; we need to consider the development of international relations and comparative politics against real world politics. Prior to the twentieth century, Deborah Garner explains, neither foreign policy nor international relations constituted a distinct field. Diplomatic history probably come the closest to what we now label as foreign policy, and much of what we call international relations came under the rubric of international law, institutional analysis, or history. Although the post World War-I years marked the strong emergence of the idealist (liberal) worldview and witnessed tangible efforts to incorporate idealist notions into the newly established League of Nations, the study of international relations and foreign policy was dominated by realism. According to Garner, for the study of foreign policy this essentially meant the study of the international actions of individual state leaders frequently monarchs who were believed to have few constraints on their actions other than those imposed by the external situations<sup>25</sup>.

In his famous and foundational article, “Pre-Theories and Theories of foreign Policy” James Rosenau sounded a clarion call to transform the study of foreign policy into a science<sup>26</sup>. According to Rosenau, foreign policy suffered from the lack of a central theoretical framework (like realism in international relations) and the lack of a common methodology<sup>27</sup>. He suggested that the common methodology be a

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

<sup>26</sup> See James Rosenau as quoted by Laura Neack, Note 10, p. 29.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

commitment to comparative analysis and that the central theory could be established through the subsequent efforts of scholars working within an agreed upon framework. Rosenau suggested his pre theory frame work, one in which he combined national attribute indicators to formulate ideal nation types.

Kenneth Waltz, who is not often associated with the study of such variations in foreign policy, has written “the foreign policy of a country is formed by its political institutions, tempered by its experiences and traditions, and shaped by the pressure of other states upon it”<sup>28</sup>. James Rosenau also recognizing the role of both “external and internal stimuli” developed a more detailed scheme for categorizing forces presumed to affect foreign policy into “idiosyncratic role, governmental, societal, and systemic variables”<sup>29</sup>. Rosenau also introduced concepts for characterizing the degree of international influence or penetration within a society, and the variation in processes associated with different issue areas<sup>30</sup>.

Approach to foreign policy include, i.e., historical, legalistic, descriptive, ideological and analytical. According to Professors Black and Thompson historical, legalistic and descriptive methods to the study of foreign policy have mostly dominated<sup>31</sup>. In its initial phase, the study of foreign policy has developed along with diplomatic history. It has been the most traditional approach. Here an effort is made to reconstruct the diplomacy of a particular period with accuracy, precision and due attention to the major events. It does not lead to any formulation of a general law or a theory or a conceptual framework. The object is a detailed and systematic study of selected powers, mainly great at a particular point of time. It seeks to enlighten the

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<sup>28</sup> See Kenneth Waltz as quoted by Benjamin E. Goldsmith, in *Imitation in International Relations: Observational learning, Analogies, and Foreign Policy in Russia and Ukraine*, (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2005), p. 25

<sup>29</sup> See James Rosenau as quoted by Benjamin E. Goldsmith, Note 28, p. 25.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> See Prof. Black & Thompson as quoted by Raghurir Chakravarti, Note 2, p. 224.

present by a reference to the past. The descriptive approach describes, in detail, the foreign policy of selected powers. This policy is sometimes described in the background of some current events or institutions. However, the selection is obviously influenced partly by the personal interest and bias of the analyst and partly by the country he represents. At times, this study has led to attempts to formulate theories and establish a conceptual framework. The ideological approach has the widest appeal. It analyses the foreign policy as expressions of prevailing political, social, and religious beliefs. It leads to classification of foreign policies as democratic or totalitarian, libertarian or socialist, and peace loving or aggressive. As all states use ideological justification for their policies, and it is rather necessary and useful to study foreign policy in ideological terms. A foreign policy is, on this view, appreciated or condemned in terms of its consistency or inconsistency with the declared ideology. In fact, foreign policies of most states display unities that transcend individual beliefs or ideologies. Therefore, any study of foreign policy exclusively in ideological terms is bound to be narrow, and ultimately misleading. At any rate, it will never be able to present a complete picture of the reality of the situation. The analytical approach developed as a sharp reaction to the ideological approach. It seeks to meet the inadequacies of the latter and construct a realistic picture of the situation. It differs from others not only in the method of viewing problems, but also in the general orientation to the field of international politics. The analytical approach has been developed on the belief that policy rests on multiple determinants including the states' historic tradition, geographical location, national interest, and purposes and security needs. Therefore, the study of foreign policy involves the accounting and analysis of a host of factors. The analytical approach seeks to explore the basic determinants of foreign policy together with the multiple factors usually considered by every foreign

policy maker. It focuses attention on firstly, the concept of competing interests; secondly, on the power of nations to achieve their interests; thirdly, the process through which policies are adopted and implemented and fourth, the international environment within which such policies interact with one another. This modern approach has certainly widened the appreciation and knowledge of foreign policies of states in history. Of the five different approaches historical, legalistic, descriptive, ideological and analytical, the analytical approach has received the widest approval in modern times with regard to serious study of foreign policy in international relations<sup>32</sup>.

The study of foreign policy derives its ideas, in large part, from the discipline of international relations. There are three worldviews or grand theories that dominate the study of international relations, Realism, Liberalism, and Marxian. Although there are and disagreements exist within each of these worldviews, these offer three fairly straightforward explanations of how things work in the world. Scholars and foreign policy makers both have an identifiable worldview, although from time to time, individuals may use one or the other or borrow key concepts to fit particular circumstances. Among these three theories the Realist theory supports the present study. Realists focus on relations between states based on differences in power. Thus Realists study foreign policy at the system level whether bilateral, regional, or global.

In order to organize the conceptual relationship between change and foreign policy, it is useful to introduce the concept of the foreign policy system. This term relates not to any idea of a system of decision making, nor to any conception of the way foreign policy is made and implemented; rather, does it simply refer to a method of organizing discussion about foreign policy. Thus, it is possible to examine the possible relationships between change and foreign policy by utilizing a simple view of

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<sup>32</sup> See Raghubir Chakravarti, Note 2, p. 227

foreign policy behaviour. Using this conception of foreign policy, it is possible to isolate four relationships between change and foreign policy; (a) between foreign policy outputs and change, (b) between foreign policy processes, structures, and change, (c) between changes in the importance of the components of the foreign policy system and foreign policy outputs, (d) between changing inputs from the environments and foreign policy outputs. The first relationship between change and foreign policy is that it is foreign policy behaviour that causes change in the environment of a state. Thus, foreign policy acts cause changes in the international political system, the dynamics of international relations being the sum total of changing foreign policy behaviour. The second perspective concentrates on the way in which changes in the structures and processes of the states determine foreign policy outputs. Thus, foreign policy outputs would be the result of changing structures and processes in decision making. The third possible relationship is between changes in the importance of the component of the foreign policy system and foreign policy outputs and the clearest example of this is Rosenau's Pretheory<sup>33</sup>. In other words, it could be argued that the causes of foreign policy behaviour, in whatever part of the system, change in importance over time and thereby alter foreign policy behaviour. Thus, over time the influence of inputs from the environment could change relative to the influence of the individuals making decisions. As societies modernize for example, the relative impact of the various elements in the environments and in the decision making process would vary. The perspective which offers the fullest discussion of the relationship between foreign policy and change however is that which focuses on foreign policy as a response to changes in the environment of the state. This view

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<sup>33</sup> See J.N. Rosenau as quoted by S.M. Smith, "Traditionalism, Behaviouralism and Change in Foreign policy Analysis", in Barry Buzan & R.J. Barry Jones, eds., *Change and the Study of International Relations: The Evaded Dimensions*, (Frances Printer (Publishers), Ltd., London), p. 191.

which underlies most of the writing in the field of foreign policy analysis sees foreign policy as the mechanism by which states attempt to cope with their changing environments, although the environment of a foreign policy system logically refers to both the domestic and external environments of the state.

The behavioural approach to the analysis of change and foreign policy may be summed up as a concern with the ways in which states adapt to their changing environments. In contrast to the work of Morgenthau, the behaviouralist perspective does not assume any objective response to change nor does it posit any guideline such as the national interest. Rather the behaviouralist approach concentrates on relating foreign policy behaviour over time to changes in the environment of the state. From a survey of the literature it is obvious that the writer who has concentrated most on this relationship is Rosenau. As a preface to his work on adaptation, it should be pointed out that Rosenau has been concerned with the problem of change in much of his work. Outside of his work on adaptation this concern receives fuller treatment in his book "The External Environment as a Variable in Foreign Policy Analysis" Rosenau focuses on the way in which the external environments of states affect their foreign policy behaviour and he contrasts this form of influence on foreign policy to the influence of the historical legacy of previous policies although he feels that the role of the former has been neglected. In an attempt to rectify this deficiency he discusses the ways in which the external environment can influence foreign policy and argues that the contemporary external environment is one in which the key component that decision makers have to cope with is the phenomenon of change. Taking this view further he notes that change may be treated as an independent variable for the analysis

of foreign policy<sup>34</sup>. He dichotomizes change into high and low and differentiates between internal and external change and the resulting matrix offers four contexts which, he posits, will foster four very different modes of foreign policy behaviour. It is worth summarizing Rosenau's definitions of the four types of foreign policy<sup>35</sup>. Habitual policy results from a situation in which neither environment experiences much change; the effect is that routine decision making processes are sufficient to cope with the demands made upon the state by its external environment. Deliberative policy is a response to low internal and high external change; it is called deliberative because the lack of domestic demands allows decision makers to weigh up the appropriate response to a rapidly changing external environment. Spirited policy is the effect of low external change and high internal change; the resulting policy is spirited because decision makers have to respond energetically to change the external environment in a form that is compatible with the demands of a rapidly changing domestic environment. Finally, convulsive policy is caused by a situation in which both the internal and the external environments are changing rapidly; the result of this situation is that decision makers have to react quickly both to external and internal demands, and their policies are consequently hurriedly determined and erratic.

International relations are moving in two main ways – in the bilateral form and in the multilateral form<sup>36</sup>. Both these forms play an important role in shaping and developing contemporary international relations. The present focus of the study would be bilateral relations these being one of the important elements of the contemporary international situation. The concept of bilateral relations comprises the political and

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 199.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> See Czeslaw Mojsiewicz, "The Role of Bilateral Interstate Relations in the World of Today", *Indian Journal of Politics*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, 2 & 3, 1980, p. 195.

cultural relations between two states. Most international diplomacy is done bilaterally. Examples of this include treaties between two countries, exchanges of ambassadors, and state visits. Of great weight in the quality of the international situation is the condition of reciprocal relations between the states. Unusually important for the stabilization of peace is the largest possible number of good or correct relations between the states. Different area size and unequal level of economic development practically reduce the number of states with which a given state wishes to maintain, as a partner, closer, better, and more extended bilateral relations. This is also subject, to a considerable degree, to such factors as different socio-political system of the states and their affiliation to military, political and economic blocs.

Some of the important factors influencing the choice of a state with regard to bilateral relations are:

- character of the socio-economic and political system existing in the given country;
- rate of complementary economic possibilities of potential partners, possibilities for complementing mutual needs;
- existence of non-existence of matters at issue requiring solutions;
- Geographical position, distance, situation towards each other;
- Affiliation to political, economic, military groups and other international organizations;
- Kind, character of the economic and foreign policy of a country, ends of that policy;
- ties existing in the past, kind of those ties throughout history;

- Rate of concurrence, interests in developing peaceful coexistence of states of different socio-political systems, in solving basic problems of international life.

It is rather difficult to assess empirically visible indicators of the state of bilateral relations. One can estimate the state of relations between two states by reference, by comparing what is at the moment to what was before, and what is possible and desired to and what is actually present. However the question arises as to when; in what period can bilateral relations develop best. One can answer it by saying in a period of international détente, when peaceful stabilization is on an increase and the Cold War is dying out. Also in circumstances of menace of war or outbreak of war with a common opponent the states may join their efforts, co-ordinate their actions to fight the aggressor. As concerns the present period of international life there is a peculiar model of reversible linkage, of mutual influence and dependence between the state of growing bilateral contacts and progress of relaxation in international relations. These two occurrence conditions each other, they affect each other. The Cold War atmosphere in international relations was dividing nations and states, fanning distrust and hostility. On the other hand the atmosphere of relaxation, particularly among the great powers, is a factor favouring the growth of bilateral relations, improvement of forms of cooperation and its range.

In the present period there is an increase of initiatives which serve sounding ways of rapprochement and developing international cooperation. There are such examples of these as round table conferences, meetings of scientists, meeting of journalists, of representatives of social and political movements, industrial and other exhibitions, organizations of culture weeks, artists and sports performances and a number of other initiatives. In the frame of bilateral relations between definite

countries an important problem depends in kind of causes of, and interest in linking and developing bilateral relations. One influencing factor could be that of ensuring the security of the state, its independence, existence, a reduction or absolute removal of the threat or danger of war. Another factor can be the constant intention to ensure the best possible external conditions of the internal development of the country for the present and for the future. The other factor may be otherwise defined as an interest in the economic development of the country. Certain other reasons for consideration of bilateral relations would be interest in scientific and technical cooperation, exchange of cultural goods, development of tourism, protection of health, wish for propagating one's own ideology, own way of life. One can state then that bilateral relations develop best when the state is interested in cooperation in all fields or in any of them (political, military, economic and ideological). Most often the development of economic relations clears the way for the development of political relations. The present study focuses on the development of Russia and Indian cooperation that has become a strong stimulus for bilateral relations.

Bilateral relations may be said to be developing on three levels<sup>37</sup>. The first level is initiated by an exchange of visits at the summit. A characteristic of the contemporary stage of international relations is the recurrence to the institution of visits by state and party leaders and increase of their frequency and rank. The development of present day means of communication allows arranging matters and making travels in a very short time and has become a factor favouring livelier contacts between the leaders. The factor of time and distance has undergone far-reaching changes.

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<sup>37</sup> See Note 36, p. 200.

Bilateral summit visits perform the following role, they symbolize the development of bilateral relations and the wish for their future intensifications; they serve an exchange of opinions on the past and contemporary stage of relations and allow to draw a further programme of their development both within bilateral relations and within the international situations; they allow the leaders to get better acquainted with each other, they serve a better recognition of the problems and opinions which are prevalent in the given country and of the country itself, of its past, of its today and of its future; they terminate some stage of negotiations and state of relations which is expressed by subscribing important documents concerning bilateral relations; they create a suitable climate and a model for other visits on lower levels; they are carefully prepared so that the visit should not be a failure, as the mutual relations would then grow worse which the parties try rather to avoid; the visits allow to combat against existing stereotypes in favour of forming real knowledge of the partner. The second level is reached with contacts below the grade of leaders of states i.e. between various political, economic, cultural and other institutions and various organizations. Finally the third level is attained with the development of most extended inter-human mass contacts.

With bilateral relations being extended by a given state, particularly with states of great international significance, the influence of the respective country is sure to be raised. And this is an additional advantage of good, extended bilateral relations. Another occurrence may make itself evident when a state which has no best bilateral relations in the frame of a given international community extends them outside the community of which it is a member. What then takes place here is the occurrence of seeking compensation to strengthen the position of that state within its community, and at the same time in the international political arena.

Finally, it may be said that foreign policy describes the attitudes, courses of action, and objectives that a state adopts in its relations towards other states and areas abroad. It reflects what a state does as well as what it seeks to do. Secondly, it is deeply rooted in domestic policy. It is conditioned by the geographical, demographic, ideological, historical and economic factors and by the prevailing international situation. Thirdly, a foreign policy can hardly be considered as a blueprint, exact in its measures and specifications. You cannot afford the luxury of over simple diagnosis and overblown cures. A foreign policy is therefore under constant reevaluation if it is to serve the country's vital interests. Fourthly, the centre of a foreign policy is the national interest; ideology and international organization are devices. Propaganda is its useful tool provided you do not become a victim of your propaganda. Finally, even a perfectly formulated foreign policy waiting to be implemented by the best of diplomats will fail until it is linked to power, for policy rests upon power in the ultimate sense and it is concerned always with preserving or increasing that power.

Russian foreign policy refers to strategic partnership with other countries. In fact, India, Vietnam, and China do already have strategic partnership with Russia. This has come about through the instrumentality of a number of bilateral agreements. For a long time, Russia has tried to establish strategic partnership with USA and Western Europe. By now, Russia is as a strategic partner of both USA and EU countries. The present study seeks to examine the strategic, military and economic relationship between India and Russia during (1991-2008). The understanding of the term strategy by Russia and India, their perception of global and regional politics, security and individual mutual interests are all relevant and are analyzed in this thesis. Keeping in mind the views and the understanding given above we will study the Indo-Russian Relations during (1991-2008). We propose to concentrate on the strategic, economic

and military dimensions of relations between the two countries. This thesis constitute attempt to analyze the strategic, economic and military relations between India and Russia. In the next chapter, we will proposed by examine the historical background of Indo-Russian strategic, economic and military relations since India's independence till the emergence of Russia, that is, from (1947-1991).

## Chapter : II

### Indo - Soviet Relations (1947-1991): A Historical Background

During the period from 1947 to 1949, the Soviet Union characterized India as a British colony. The Soviet attitude towards India under Joseph Stalin shows that on the whole, the policies were influenced by two factors. In the initial stage, when India was an ineffective power to Soviet national interests, she was treated as an Anglo-American colony<sup>1</sup>. Secondly, during this period India was rarely noticed by the Soviet representatives in the United Nations. During this period the Soviet authorities were testing their toughness in Europe too by engaging in the Berlin Blockade, which lasted for nearly two years. Right through 1947 to the end of 1949, the Soviet Union was pre occupied with the Marshal plan, NATO, Berlin blockade, Yugoslavia and the communization of East Europe. Thus, principally engaged in Europe, Asia was a neglected land in the Soviet eyes during this period<sup>2</sup>.

But, in 1950, when India decided to recognize the Peoples Republic of China and insisted that China should occupy a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, this decision was appreciated by the Soviet Union. During the last phase of Joseph Stalin's rule, Soviet Union's policies towards India started changing and Soviet Union adopted a friendly attitude towards India. At the 19th Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU) Congress, held at Moscow in 1952, G.

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<sup>1</sup> For details see J.A. Naik, *Russia's policy Towards India-From Stalin to Yeltsin*, (M.D. Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1995), p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

M.Malenkov, the erstwhile Secretary of CPSU, said that the Soviet Union desires to develop and strengthen relations with India<sup>3</sup>. For the first time, at the meeting of UN Security Council, held on January 17, 1952, the Soviet delegate Jacob Mallick strongly criticized Britain and the U.S.A. for their policy of interference in Kashmir and suggested that the people of Jammu and Kashmir should be given “an opportunity to decide the question of Kashmir’s constitutional status by themselves without outside interference”. He also said that this could be achieved only if that status is determined by a Constituent Assembly democratically elected by the Kashmir people<sup>4</sup>.

In the post-Stalin era after (1953), Soviet leaders such as G.M. Malenkov, N.A. Bulganin and N.S. Khrushchev re-evaluated India’s position, and observed that India was following a ‘non-aligned’ policy between the two Cold War blocs. The Soviet leaders calculated that India’s policy and her prominent role in the ‘Third World’ countries might prove helpful in Kremlin’s effort to break out from its ‘encirclement by the imperialist nations’ and to promote a new line of ‘peaceful co-existence’<sup>5</sup>. The post-Stalin Soviet leadership made efforts to establish friendly relations with India, with a view to keeping India away from the Western power blocs. The Soviet Union was convinced that India was determined to follow an independent policy even if it remained in the Commonwealth. The then Soviet Prime Minister Bulganin told Indian Ambassador K.P.S. Menon that, he and his colleagues fully appreciated India's position in the Commonwealth and hoped that India would continue to remain in it<sup>6</sup>. This new attitude towards India emanated

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<sup>3</sup> See for details Sanjay Gaikwad, “Indo-Soviet Relations: India’s Independence to Tashkent”, in Verinder Grover, ed., *International Relations and Foreign Policy of India*, (Deep & Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1992), p.20.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> For details see Arthur Stein, “India's Relations with the USSR, 1953 – 1963”, Note 3, p. 81.

<sup>6</sup> See for details G.D. Bhatt, *Indo-Soviet Relations and Indian Public Opinion*, (Pacifier

from the Soviet perception that India would not allow its membership of the Commonwealth to curb its freedom of initiative. In this regard, on 8th August 1953, Premier Malenkov address to Supreme Soviet had opened a new phase of Soviet relationship with India<sup>7</sup>.

The Korean War had a great impact on Indo-Soviet relations. During this period (1953-1954), the non-aligned India played an important role, which was effective. The policies of the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru for peaceful settlement of the Korean War brought India's position and its image in the eyes of Soviet Union. India voted in favour of Soviet Union in the Security Council's two resolutions on Korea sponsored by the USA and the UK against the USSR. Moreover, India also did not agree to send her troops to fight against Soviet Union in the Korean War. By this stand on Korean issue, India extended her direct support to Soviet Union. At the same time, India proved herself that she was no more a British colony. Supporting India's stand on the Korean issue, both Stalin and Malenkov, said that "there are no disputes or outstanding issues today, which can not be settled peacefully by mutual agreement between parties concerned" (i.e., India and the Soviet Union)<sup>8</sup>. Noticing India as an emerging powerful nation in Asia and her assistance to the USSR to solve the Korean problem, Malenkov said "of great importance for the promotion of peace in the East is the attitude of so big a country as India. India has made substantial contribution to the efforts of the peace loving countries to stop the Korean War. Our relations with India are growing firmer, and cultural and economic intercourse with India becoming wider.

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Publications, Delhi, 1989), p.10.

<sup>7</sup> See Sanjay Gaikwad, Note 3, p.24.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 21.

We hope that relations between India and Soviet Union will become stronger and develop in a spirit of friendly cooperation”<sup>9</sup>.

During 1954, the Soviet leader Khrushchev changed the non-committal attitude of the Stalin era towards South Asia and adopted the policy of “strengthening friendship and cooperation with neutral and peace loving countries in Europe and the Third World”. India’s policy of non-alignment and rejection of any bloc politics received due attention of the Soviet leadership. On 25th February 1954, the President Eisenhower announced US Government’s decision to provide arms to Pakistan. After a few months on 19th May, despite India’s protests, the United States and Pakistan signed a mutual defence assistance agreement and four months later Pakistan joined the US sponsored military pact, the South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), which posed serious security problem for India. What brought more botheration for India’s defence and foreign policy makers was the undue US support to Pakistan on the floor of Security Council regarding the Kashmir issue. In 1954, the Soviet Union was being encircled through a series of military alliances like the SEATO and the CENTO, which Pakistan was a party to. India, being a non-aligned country, would have been helpful for the Soviet Union to counteract the encirclement<sup>10</sup>. The new security environment in the Indian sub-continent demanded New Delhi to undertake an expansion of its military establishment and to find out ways and means of off setting the additional advantages gained by Pakistan. It created further opportunities for Moscow to develop its relations with New Delhi. India and the Soviet Union tended to pursue similar policies; both had held that the US military aid to Pakistan increased tension in South Asia; both had subscribed to the view that the wider acceptance of

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> See for details Vijaya Sen Budhraj, “Major Dimensions of Indo-Soviet Relations”, Note 3, p. 122.

the five principles of peaceful co-existence (Panchsheel) would enlarge the area of peace and promote mutual confidence among nations, and pave the way for greater international co-operation; both had condemned colonialism and racialism and held that colonialism was a threat to world peace. Both believed that America's military aid programme would strengthen the reactionary elements in Pakistan leading to an arms race in the sub continent and that would be detrimental to the interests of the peoples of the region. The Soviet and Indian stand on disarmament were very similar. Both the countries bitterly criticized the United States for the explosion of a hydrogen bomb. In 1954, the UN Commission on Disarmament resumed discussions Great Britain suggested that the US, the USSR, Canada, Great Britain and France should be included in the subcommittee to consider the concrete aspects of arms reduction and prohibition of atomic weapons, the Soviet Union called it a one sided approach and proposed to include the People's Republic of China (PRC), India and Czechoslovakia also. Moscow began supporting Delhi on the issue of regional security. On 13 March 1954, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov declared that the Soviet Union understands India's position on this problem and that they have taken and shall take all necessary steps to prevent Pakistan from committing any dangerous actions made under the pressure of the United States<sup>11</sup>.

According to former Indian Ambassador to the Soviet Union, K.P.S. Menon, the relations between India and the Soviet Union after India became independent may be divided into two phases - a passive phase and an active phase<sup>12</sup>. If one is to give a date, the active phase may be said to have begun in 1955. It was in that year that Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru paid his

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<sup>11</sup> For details see Sergey Lounev, "The Soviet Perception of India's Foreign Policy in the 1940s-1950s", in Max-Jean Zins & Gilles Boquerat, *India in the Mirror of Foreign Diplomatic Archives*, (Manohar Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, 2004), p.75.

<sup>12</sup> For details see K.P.S. Menon as quoted by J.A. Naik, Note 1, p. 71.

memorable visit to the Soviet Union. It was in that year that Soviet leader Khrushchev also paid his equally memorable visit to India.

That the new understanding reached between India, and the Soviet Union did not fall into the Cold-War pattern but, instead came to be based on terms of complete equality and mutual benefit, was to underline the importance which the Soviet Union had come to attach to strengthening its link with India, and also the ability of Khrushchev to transcend the psychology of the Cold War. The Soviet Union under his leadership recognized that a number of advantages were bound to accrue to itself by widening the sphere of co-operation with India:

- (i) by helping to strengthen India, as a great bulwark of peace and stability in Asia, the Soviet Union could successfully keep at bay other outside powers seeking to undermine Soviet interests and influence in the region,
- (ii) by strengthening the ties with the founder of the “non-aligned club”, the Soviet Union could have easy access, to the fast-growing “Third World”,
- (iii) at a time when all contacts, and channels of communication between the two blocs had snapped, ‘India, could serve as a sort of bridge between the East and the West’.

If such considerations led the Soviet Union to warm up its relations with India; the latter was not slow to recognize the advantages which it could secure by strengthening the Indo Soviet link. Thus, the two states whose interests seemed to be threatened in Asia by the growing power and influence of the United States and People’s Republic of China came to recognize the community of their geo-political

interests and sought to cooperate with each other in areas where an overlapping of their interests was in evidence<sup>13</sup>.

In June 1955, the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, visited the USSR. During his visit Nehru laid down the most important single test of Soviet's friendship with India. He said "let our coming together be because we like each other and we wish to cooperate and not because we dislike some other nation or wish to cause them injury"<sup>14</sup>. Nehru discussed the bilateral cooperation and international problems relating to peace with N.A Bulganin, his Soviet counterpart. The visit of Nehru to the Soviet Union had a great impact on the Soviet leaders. The impact of Nehru's visit was reflected in the Bulganin's speech when he described in July 1955 at Geneva, "Nehru's visit to Soviet Union as one of the events of great significance". Bulganin said that, the Soviet Union attached great value to its cooperation with India as an important factor in the struggle for peace in Asia. He further said, "both the countries take same positions on urgent problems concerning the struggle for peace and this is of great importance in the settlement of persisting Asian and far Eastern problems and in easing international tensions"<sup>15</sup>.

On 18th November, 1955, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, N.S. Khrushchev and the Prime Minister of USSR, N.A. Bulganin, arrived in New Delhi for a friendly official visit to India. The visit of these Soviet leaders was considered important because, for the first time, the Soviet government's policy on Kashmir dispute was pronounced in favour of

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<sup>13</sup> For details see R. Vaidyanath, "Some Recent Trends in Soviet Policies towards India and Pakistan", *International Studies*, Vol. VII, No.3, January 1966, p.431.

<sup>14</sup> See for details Krishan Gopal, "India and Russia: The Ambit of Strategic Partnership", in P.L. Dash & Andrei M. Nazarkin, *Indo-Russian Diplomatic Relations: Sixty Years of Enduring Legacy*, (Academic Excellence Publisher & Distributors, Delhi, 2008), p.71.

<sup>15</sup> See for details N.A. Bulganin as quoted by Sanjay Gaikwad, Note 3, p. 28.

India. In all their major speeches in India, Khrushchev and Bulganin supported India's claim over Kashmir and Goa<sup>16</sup>. On 10th December 1955, in Srinagar, Khrushchev made a major policy statement in which he said in clear terms that the question of Kashmir, which was created by some colonial power had to be solved by the people of Kashmir themselves and that the Soviet Government will accept this position. Khrushchev even went to the extent of disapproving the very partition of the Indian subcontinent on religious grounds and doubted the wisdom of creating Pakistan. In one of his public speeches during his visit, Nikita Khrushchev had echoed similar views, when he said "we are your friends and not only in good weather when the sun is shining pleasantly. We are your friends in any weather, and if a breeze or draft should ever blow which is harmful to the health of the Indian people, remember us and we shall never forget you"<sup>17</sup>. And after this visit, the Soviet leader laid down the extent to which he was ready to go in evolving a more stable basis of Indo-Soviet relations. At the end of their visit, a joint statement was issued on 13th December 1955, through which both India and the Soviet Union had opposed the extension of the system of military alliances and reaffirmed the principle of peaceful co-existence among states with different political systems.

A day after Bulganin and Khrushchev had left the Indian soil 'The Hindustan Times' (an Indian daily English news paper) said that the visit had forged a strong bond of friendship between India and the Soviet Union. The Indian Express (an English daily) of Delhi and Madras described the joint statement as "a document of momentous importance" which "sets out in dearest terms the aims and purposes which have steadily brought the two countries closer to each other".

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p.29

<sup>17</sup> For details see Krishan Gopal, Note 14, p. 71.

National Herald (an English daily) of Lucknow wrote that reaffirmation of their faith in the five principles of co-existence by Marshal Bulganin and Khrushchev was in tune with the interests of all peace loving people as well as world peace. The paper noted the Soviet leaders belief that acceptance of these principles by all countries, including Britain, France and the United States, would be of “a great help in lessening international tension”. Similarly, The Tribune of Ambala (an English daily) suggested that the joint statement should be welcomed in “all quarters” if world peace “is still the supreme consideration in international affairs”. Evidently, the Soviet leaders had left a friendly impression on the minds of the Indians and their views on different issues were highly appreciated.

The Indo-Soviet friendship was tested at the time of two very important events during 1956, the Suez Canal Crisis and the Hungarian Crisis. The Suez Crisis revealed the common approach of India and the USSR. Indian Prime Minister Nehru sharply reacted to the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt in October 1956. At the London Conference the Soviet Union supported the proposals made by the Indian delegation. The Indian proposals were described by the Soviet Foreign Minister Shepilov as a plan for a just and peaceful settlement of the Suez problem. Both the USSR and India described it as a “flagrant violation of UN Charter” and a case of “clear, naked aggression”. They supported Egypt against the invasion of UK, France and Israel.

On November 5, 1957, at the time of a discussion on the Kashmir question in the Security Council of the UN, the Soviet delegate fully supported India’s stand and drew attention to Gunner Jarring’s observation that significant changes had taken place in Kashmir as well as in the surrounding areas since the dispute began. The Soviet delegate strongly opposed the proposals involving induction of foreign

troops into Kashmir or reference of the problem of demilitarization to arbitration or mediation. He described that the purpose of the proposal was “to cover up and justify foreign intervention in the Kashmir problem and the domestic affairs of India to the detriment of its natural sovereignty”. In his speech, the Soviet delegate extended full support to the Indian stand. As on previous occasions, he maintained that the Kashmir question was created by the interested Western powers who “were guided primarily by their own interests and who aimed at penetrating into this region which was of great strategic importance to them”<sup>18</sup>. Coming to the question of Kashmir’s accession to India, he said, “the Kashmir question was to be settled by the Kashmir people themselves who consider they to be an inalienable part of the Republic of India. The UN Security Council cannot disregard these facts”. The Soviet delegate again restated in an unambiguous language, his government’s position at subsequent meetings. Referring to the question of plebiscite, he said, the Security Council cannot ignore the facts which have been placed before it notably in the statement made by the representative of India. The facts show that in the many years that have passed since the Security Council adopted its resolutions on the holding of a plebiscite, the situation in Kashmir has changed considerably. We must not forget that the idea of a plebiscite in Kashmir now meets with the objections of one of third parties; that it has in fact been rejected by that party. At the present time, the holding of a plebiscite in Kashmir, with outside interference in one form or another, as proposed by some members of the Security Council, can serve only to excite local conflicts and to complicate the international situation in the area. The task of the Security Council however, is to strengthen peace and tranquility in the area. He maintained that under these circumstances, the issue of including in the Security Council

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<sup>18</sup> See for details J.A. Naik, Note 1, p. 110

resolution, a clause providing for the holding of a plebiscite in Kashmir clearly has no purpose at all.

On July 19, 1958, in connection with the situation, which had arisen in the Middle East due to Anglo-American aggression against Jordan and Lebanon, the then Soviet Prime Minister N.S. Khrushchev proposed to convene a summit conference of the governments of the USSR, the USA, Great Britain, France and India with the participation of the UN Secretary General. In his message to the Indian Prime Minister, the Soviet Prime Minister said, “by supporting the proposal for an immediate conference and by her own active participation in it, India would make an inestimable contribution to the cause of preserving peace”. In a reply to the message of the Soviet Prime Minister, Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India, said, “we shall gladly offer our services to it (the idea of summit) in the cause of peace if they are needed”<sup>19</sup>.

On 15th December, 1961, when Leonid Brezhnev, the President of Soviet Union visited India, he said that India’s action of liberating Goa is a “completely lawful and rightful act”<sup>20</sup>. When the act of liberating Goa from Portuguese domination was on, the USA through a resolution in the UN Security Council accused India as an aggressor and demanded the withdrawal of Indian forces from Goa. On the other hand, the Soviet delegate in the Security Council of the UN said that, “we openly declare that we side with the people of India, with the people of Goa who are fighting to free themselves from Portugal’s colonial domination. This position may not be to the liking of some, but we consider it necessary to state it openly before the whole world”. The Soviet people unanimously supported

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<sup>19</sup> See for details A. Roy, *India & Soviet Union - A Chronology of Political and Diplomatic Co-operation*, (Firma KLM Publication Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta, 1982), p.13.

<sup>20</sup> See details Sanjay Gaikwad, Note 3, p.31.

friendly India in this regard and wished her every success in strengthening her independence<sup>21</sup>.

In February 1962, when the Security Council met to consider the Kashmir issue, the Soviet Union consistently upheld the view that there was nothing for the Security Council to do, since the people of Kashmir had already decided their future by merging with India. Speaking in the Security Council on May 4, 1962, the Soviet representative Morozov said, “the question of Kashmir, which is one of the states of the Republic of India and integral part of India, has been decided by the people of Kashmir themselves. The people of Kashmir decided this matter in accordance with the principles of democracy and in the interest of strengthening friendly relations between the peoples of this region”. On June 21, 1962, when the US delegate kept on referring to the earlier resolutions in the Security Council on Kashmir, with the obvious intention of resurrecting the idea of a plebiscite to decide the future of Kashmir, the Soviet delegate strongly dissented and remarked in course of his speech “it is now quite unrealistic to demand a plebiscite just as, in the words of the representative of India, obviously no one would now demand a plebiscite in Texas, Ohio or any other state in the United States of America”<sup>22</sup>.

But when Sino-Indian and Sino-Soviet relations worsened, Pakistan drifted towards China and Sino-Pakistani relations improved. This development caused concern in both New Delhi and Moscow, more so in New Delhi because it noticed a change in Moscow’s attitude towards Pakistan. Quite possibly, the Soviets thought that Pakistan's growing cordiality towards China was more dangerous than US-Pakistan friendship. Distant America, the Kremlin perhaps concluded, would have to leave South Asia one day, but China would always be there, on the North

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> See for details A. Roy, Note 19, p. 17.

of the Indian sub-continent. Second, Pakistan's drift toward China had to be checked for the maintenance of peace in, what Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin thought of was, Soviet sphere of interest. Moscow stepped up its efforts to woo Pakistan, and between 1963 and 1964, the two countries signed a number of economic cooperation agreements. Third, the reverses suffered by India's armed forces on the Sino-Indian borders in 1962 had exploded the myth that India was a great power, capable of defending the subcontinent by its own strength. Later, when during the 1965 India-Pakistan war, the Chinese bolstered Pakistan's fighting spirit by supporting it and by threatening to intervene, the Soviets were convinced that the Indo-Pakistan conflicts not only undermined the stability of the sub-continent nations, but also created opportunities for dissatisfied aggressive powers to spread their influence in the region and thus benefit from the bitterness between New Delhi and Rawalpindi. Soviet diplomacy was therefore, directed in the mid 1960s to win over Pakistan and to work for collaboration between India and Pakistan. In pursuance of the second objective, the Soviets advised the subcontinent nations to sink their differences.

In pursuance of the first objective, it decided to give a clear evidence of treating India and Pakistan on par, which in 1968 led to the Soviet decision to supply arms to Pakistan<sup>23</sup>. Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin paid a brief visit to India in April 1968. New Delhi thought Moscow would not supply arms to Pakistan. But India's apprehensions were confirmed when Premier Kosygin informed Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 7 July 1968 that the USSR intended to supply arms to Pakistan. Immediately there after in July 1968 itself, a Soviet Pakistani Arms Agreement was announced. The Soviet decision was widely criticized in the Indian

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<sup>23</sup> For details see Vijaya Sen Budhraj, "Major Dimensions of Indo-Soviet Relations", Note 3, pp. 124-125.

Parliament and media. The Government of India's official reaction was critical of the decision, and yet presented it in carefully measured terms. The then Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi told parliament that the Soviet decision would not only heighten tensions in the region but also add to India's defence burden. However she urged Indians to react to the Soviet move with "composure and dignity". Kosygin personally informed the Indian leaders that Moscow continued to regard India as the kingpin of its South Asia policy and explained that a Soviet presence in Pakistan was the only way to diminish Chinese influence and block 'imperialist intervention' against Indian interests. Kosygin assured Mrs. Gandhi that "nothing would be done to undermine 'Indo-Soviet' friendship"<sup>24</sup>.

On 7th June 1969, General Secretary of the CPSU, Leonid Brezhnev visited India. During his visit he emphasized the need for creating a system of collective security for Asia, which would be helpful both for the Soviet Union and India. According to them, what was basic to the concept was the reduction of tensions among the Asian nations arising from bilateral disputes. Later, after his talks with the Soviet leaders in Moscow, Dinesh Singh declared on 15 September 1969 that the Soviet Plan was "in line with our own and we support this, for it did not envisage a defence pact but a system based on Asian cooperation and renunciation of the use of force". At the same time, US-Pakistan relations had begun to improve. During his visit to Pakistan in August 1969, USA President Nixon (who as Vice-President had recommended the extension of military aid to Pakistan in the 1950s), assured Pakistan that he would work for friendship between the two countries. In October 1970, in pursuance of this policy, the United States decided, "a one-time exception" to give to Pakistan military hardware worth 15.40 million

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<sup>24</sup> See for details M.J. Vinod, "Attitudes Towards India: Contrasting Approaches of the United States and the Soviet Union, *India Quarterly*, Vol. XLVI, No.1, January-March, 1990, p.26.

dollars at a throwaway price. Meanwhile, the erstwhile Pakistan President Yahya Khan also decided to further strengthen Sino-Pakistani ties. In July 1969, he dispatched a goodwill mission, led by Air Marshal Nur Khan to Beijing, where the Air Marshal observed that friendship between China and Pakistan was “a constant factor in the affairs” of the world. Rawalpindi too had no intention to be a party to Moscow's anti Chinese designs. Understandably, while New Delhi was in favour of Moscow, Islamabad was in favour of Washington. Compared to that of Pakistan, India's bargaining power vis a vis Moscow had increased. The international situation had undergone important changes indeed. The Sino-Indian and the Sino-Soviet differences had made Beijing cultivate the friendship with Pakistan. The Sino-Soviet split and the decision of the United States and China to reverse their attitude of mutual hostility had made Moscow look for allies in Asia<sup>25</sup>. The sub-continent nations were thus willy nilly drawn into the Sino Soviet conflict and the Soviet American rivalry. The Soviet Union and India also held similar position in the creation of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. The Soviet Union and India reaffirmed their readiness to cooperate towards the earliest implementations of the UN Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

Similarly the growing Chinese disenchantment with the Soviet ideology and the emerging US China relationship in the 1970s caused concern among the Soviet leadership. This impelled the Soviet leadership to look for a strategic partner in the South Asian region to counter the growing alliances and there was no better choice than India<sup>26</sup>. These factors led to strategic convergence between the two countries. It was in line with this growing relationship that the Soviet Union

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<sup>25</sup> For details see Vijaya Sen Budhraj, “Major Dimensions of Indo-Soviet Relations”, Note 3, p. 128.

<sup>26</sup> See for details Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, “Russia’s Policy towards the Kashmir Issue in the Changing World Order”, *International Studies*, Vol. 41, No.1, January-March, 2004, p.131.

supported India on the Kashmir issue in the United Nations Security Council on later occasions. During the 1970s, India had its own interests to be achieved through the Soviet connection. These interests flowed from the need for foreign assistance for its internal economic development. But more importantly, they flowed from a perceived need for Soviet support in defense and foreign policy. It would be incorrect therefore, to assume that India was being innocently ensnared in a Soviet trap. It could be called a “coincidence of interests”. From the regional perspective India looked upon the Soviet Union as a crucial counterweight to a potential threat from China. Border differences were a source of contention between India and China, apart from China’s close ties with neighboring Pakistan, India’s foremost adversary. This had made the Soviet connection most desirable for India. Similarly, U.S. policy of using China and Pakistan as strategic counterweights to Soviet expansion in Asia tended to encourage India to look to Moscow for protection of its regional interests. Thus, the Soviet Union played a key role in India’s objectives of maintaining military preponderance over Pakistan and deterring China. Arms aid and co production arrangements with Moscow were accordingly very important. Since the main concern of India was the disruption of the regional military and political balance, revival of U.S. Pakistani ties, and a new U.S. military role in the region, all of which countered India’s own political ambitions. A close alignment with Moscow had also served India’s larger geopolitical and international purposes. India found a shared interest with the Soviets in the effort to turn the Indian Ocean region into “a zone of peace”, as the Soviets term it, not necessarily as a genuine ally of Moscow, but rather in response to its own national interests; namely to reduce the role of external powers and increase its own influence in the region and especially to prevent outside military support of rivals or domination of smaller neighbors by outside powers.

Converting the Indian Ocean region into a “zone of peace” was an Indian proposal mooted through Sri Lanka in 1970. The Soviets simply gave lip service to the idea, and the Indians knew it; but it served their objectives. On the other hand, the Soviets were slightly serious about this proposal. From their perspective, the presence of U.S. trident submarines SSBN’s in the Indian Ocean was a threat to the Soviet homeland, just as the U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean was a threat to their vital sea lane communications. There was also a belief that constraints on the non littoral powers contiguous with the Indian Ocean would reduce the level of tension in the area that was brought on by escalating naval deployments of the superpowers. The Indians, however, were not blind to Soviet purposes in the area. But their main concern was the United States since the American policy had tended to support their enemies in contrast to the Soviets<sup>27</sup>. Finally, the Soviet connection could be perceived as an asset advancing India's role in the Non Alignment Movement (NAM), although since the invasion of Afghanistan it had been something like an albatross for India. Nonalignment, based on often genuine grievances of past colonial experiences, represented a substantial component of power in world politics. However unfounded the Soviet claims on the organization seemed to the West, nonetheless, many radical members, if not most saw truth in the Soviet argument and equated the West and the United States with colonial and imperial policies and aspirations. Hence close ties with Moscow could give India wider access for building the influence and power it already had within the movement. Thus India had something to gain from the Soviet connection, both from the regional and geopolitical perspectives. In this connection Prof. Robert C. Horn, an Asian specialist at the California State University at

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<sup>27</sup> For details see Joseph G. Whelan & Michael J. Dixon, *The Soviet Union in the Third World: Threat to World Peace*, (Pergamon-Brassey’s International Defence Publisher, Virginia, 1986), p.126.

Northridge, rightly said that “Moscow could hardly have a better Third World ally to work with” in pursuing its Asian and global policy, it could also be rightly said that India too has a useful Soviet ally in pursuing its own regional and geostrategic interests<sup>28</sup>. This relative “equality” or “partnership” that characterized Soviet Indian relations appeared to be unusual, if not unique, in Soviet Third World relations. The Professor concluded that, by the end of the 1970's (and before Afghanistan war) relations between Moscow and New Delhi developed “to a point of closeness and cooperation that few other major powers and Third World relationships had achieved”<sup>29</sup>.

During East Pakistan crisis in March 1971, both China and America supported the military regime of Pakistan, which caused India a lot of security tensions due to the formation of Sino-American-Pakistan axis, which upset the balance of power situation in the South Asian subcontinent. To redress the balance of power, India looked to Moscow for support and that is how both the Soviet Union and India signed a twenty year Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation on 9th August 1971. The rationale on the part of Indian foreign policy makers in signing the treaty of 1971 had two objectives (1) to ensure an uninterrupted flow of Soviet military equipment and its spare parts to face the challenge of the oncoming, inevitable war with Pakistan (2) to offset the possible role of China as an active supporter to Pakistan in a crisis and if possible, deter China from begin actively involved in the oncoming conflict in support of

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p.127.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p.125.

Pakistan<sup>30</sup>. During this period the factors that influenced the Indo-Soviet relations may be listed as follows:

- United States military aid to Pakistan
- Sino-Soviet confrontation
- Indo-US estrangement
- Sino-US quasi strategic alliance
- Sino-Pak strategic nexus
- US-Pak military alliances
- Soviet Union's need to reach out to the third world through India as a leading nation<sup>31</sup>.

According to Prof. Peter Zwick, the Soviet-Indian strategic partnership during 1971 was based on some mutual interest like (1) the containment of China and the reduction of Western influence in the Asian region; and (2) India used the Soviet military aid to pursue its own regional goals, the most important of which were containment of Pakistan and Bangladesh<sup>32</sup>. In 1971, India's decision not to join any blocs in the Cold War period, which favoured the Soviet Union indirectly, because of India's non-aligned stand, encouraged a number of states not to join either bloc in the bi-polar world. During this period, the common interests and aims of both the countries were the destruction of colonialism, neo-colonialism and racialism.

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<sup>30</sup> See for details Sita Gopalan Ramchandran, "India's Relations with Erstwhile Soviet Union and Russia, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. XVIII, No. 7, October 1995, p. 979.

<sup>31</sup> For details see Subas Kapjla, "India-Russia Strategic Cooperation: Time To Move Away", *Strategic Affairs Analysis*, 2004, available on <http://www.saag.org/papers2/paper144.html>.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

The 1973 visit to India by Leonid Brezhnev constituted a big stride in the development of friendship between the two countries and the peoples. Both sides expressed profound satisfaction with the expansion and strengthening of bilateral relations, reaffirmed their determination to further work for all round consolidation of Indo-Soviet friendship. The joint Indo Soviet declaration, the agreement on further development of cooperation between the two countries, the protocol on concrete issues of this cooperation as well as the agreement on cooperation of the planning bodies of the two countries and the consular convention were a major contribution to the development of mutually advantageous relations between the two countries and could serve the interests of universal peace. Both the countries stressed the necessity to settle all outstanding problems in the Indian sub-continent through negotiations between the countries without any interference from outside. The two countries attached special importance to the broad development of mutually advantageous cooperation, consolidation of peace and stability in Asia based on joint efforts of all states in the area. In a speech at the Delhi Red Fort Grounds on November 27, 1973, Leonid Brezhnev once again reiterated: “friendship with India is part and parcel of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. We were with you when India was under the yoke of colonialism. We were with you when India’s statehood was emerging. We were with you in the difficult and trying periods for India. We were with you when various external forces were trying to put pressure on your country when it was up holding its vital interests. We shall be with you in the days of joy and in the days of trial”<sup>33</sup>. The then Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi recognized, as she had told Brezhnev at a mass rally during his 1973 visit that “true friendship is that which is extended in an hour of

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<sup>33</sup> See for details Jagat Singh Anand, *Soviet Union in World Affairs*, (Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1977), p.82.

trial". Mrs. Gandhi was reminded of all that the Soviet Union had done for India and in her own appreciation of that she was noted to have said that "when one is in trouble or danger, it is especially important to hear a voice of support and assistance, to hear words of sympathy and feel a helping hand". Finally, she was said to have remarked that the Soviet Union had demonstrated this help and support "on repeated occasions"<sup>34</sup>. All indications, however, were that the Soviets were here asking for a direct return, in similar goods, of past Soviet support for India. The Afghanistan crisis and the reaction to it including that among the non-aligned states had produced the USSR's own "hour of trial". The Soviet Union needed "a voice of support and assistance", "words of sympathy", and "a helping hand". Moreover, New Delhi owed this to Moscow given Moscow's repeated "sacrifices" for India<sup>35</sup>.

Mr. Leonid. Brezhnev, in his speech at the October 1976 Plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee particularly emphasized the great importance of the visit of Mrs. Indira Gandhi to the USSR that year. He maintained that "the talks with her confirmed once more that our friendship with that great and peace-loving Asian power is deepening and growing stronger, that our cooperation is expanding to the great benefit of the peoples of both countries, to the good of universal peace"<sup>36</sup>. But an important feature of Indo-Soviet relationship from the outset has been that it had never been circumscribed by some basic principles. There has always been a tendency to go beyond them. This had been primarily due to two factors. In the first place, there was the unity of endeavor between the two countries to ensure durable peace on earth, and to see an end of the inhuman

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<sup>34</sup> For details see Robert C. Horn "Afghanistan and the Soviet –Indian Influence Relationship", *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXIII, No. 3, March 1983, p.253.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> See for details Jagat Singh Anand, Note.33, p.77.

system of colonialism and imperialist exploitation in the world. Secondly, it has been the consistent effort of the Soviet Union to help India to consolidate her economic independence and play a role in the comity of nations commensurate with her importance.

During Indian Prime Minister Moraji Desai's visit to Moscow in October 1977 the Prime Minister noted that "Soviet Indian friendship had survived the test of time" and it was an "important factor in the cause of peace and stability in Asia and the world"<sup>37</sup>. The periods of Soviet leaders Andropov and Chernenko were short in Soviet politics (1982-1985) and did not witness any radical shift in Indo-Soviet relationship. Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, the then Indian Foreign Minister, even waxed eloquent about the Indo-Soviet bond being as solid as the Bhilai steel in India<sup>38</sup>.

In 1979, Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev visited India. The result of his visit gave convincing proof that Soviet Indian friendship met the vital interests of both peoples and that the possibilities for cooperation are truly timeless. Speaking in the Indian Parliament, the erstwhile Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi said that the Soviet President's visit had given a valuable opportunity to confirm the soundness and viability to Indo Soviet relations. Those relations, she said were based on trust and had therefore withstood the test of time. That friendship was varied and beneficial to the peoples of both countries. On March 15, 1979, both India and the Soviet Union reaffirmed their determination to continue joint and active efforts bilaterally and in international fora towards strengthening their bilateral ties. Both the sides reiterated their firm support for their idea of

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<sup>37</sup> For details see Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 26, p.132.

<sup>38</sup> See for details Partha S.Gosh & Rajaram Panda, "Domestic Support for Mrs. Gandhi's Afghan Policy: The Soviet Factor in Indian Politics", *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXIII, No.3, p.270.

converting the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. In this regard Leonid Brezhnev said that, Indian Ocean has always been the sphere of the vital interests of the countries situated along its coast and of no others with great satisfaction<sup>39</sup>. The meeting and talks between Leonid Brezhnev and Mrs. Indira Gandhi emphasized that the promotion of the Indo-Soviet relations of friendship was not aimed against any third country.

In 1979 at the United Nations, Indian Ambassador B. C. Mishra remained silent when the Afghanistan issue came before the Security Council at the request of the U.S. and other states, including many of the nonaligned group. After the issue was transferred to the General Assembly under the “Uniting for Peace” process, Mishra became the first non Soviet bloc envoy to speak essentially for the Soviet position. Addressing a resolution sponsored by 17 nonaligned nations which appealed to all states to refrain from interfering in Afghanistan and, without identifying the troops involved, called for an immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan. Mishra said in part, India cannot look with equanimity on the attempts by some outside powers to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan by training, arming and encouraging subversive elements to create disturbances inside Afghanistan. Mishra added that we are against the presence of foreign troops and bases in any country, but then immediately went on to say however, the Soviet Government has assured our government that its troops went to Afghanistan at the request of the Afghan Government first made by President Amin on December 26, 1979, and repeated by his successor on December 28, 1979. And we have been further assured that Soviet troops will be withdrawn when requested to do so by the Afghan Government.

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<sup>39</sup> See for details F. Yurlov, “Soviet-Indian Friendship: Factor of Peace and Progress”, *International Affairs*, March 3, 1981, p. 64.

Although he later mentioned that India hopes that “Soviet forces will not remain there a day longer than necessary”, his fundamental conclusion was that “we have no reason to doubt assurances, particularly from a friendly country like the Soviet Union with whom we have many close ties”<sup>40</sup>.

During 1980 the Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi had taken charge of India’s strategy on the Afghan issue. On January 12, she instructed Brajesh Mishra, the then Indian envoy at the United Nations, to make the following points in a statement on India’s stand on Afghanistan, that (1) the Soviet Union sent troops to Afghanistan on December 24, 1979, at the request of the Afghan government; (2) while India was against the presence of foreign troops and bases in any country, it had no reason to disbelieve a friendly country like the Soviet Union when it said that it would withdraw troops from Afghanistan when asked to do so by the government in Kabul; (3) India hoped that the Soviet Union would not violate the independence of Afghanistan.

In the 1980s, India stood by the Soviet Union during the crisis of Afghanistan and Cambodia, and showed that it could be relied upon to try and solve or at least ease out the Soviet problems. India’s support was useful because of its influential role in the NAM at the UN, and as an emerging leading Third World country. Prior to the Non-Alignment Foreign Ministers meeting in New Delhi in 1981, Moscow appealed to India for help in its hour of trial as India had been helped by the USSR during its own use of the military instruments in the liberation of Goa (1961) and Bangladesh (1971)<sup>41</sup>. When Mrs. Gandhi told Leonid Brezhnev at a civic reception in New Delhi in December 1980 that Indo-Soviet

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<sup>40</sup> See for details Robert C. Horn, Note 34, p.246.

<sup>41</sup> For details see Ramesh Thakur, “India and The Soviet Union: Conjunctions and Disjunctions of Interests”, *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXXI, No.9, September 1991, p. 829.

friendship is of equal importance to both India and Soviet Union, she was probably referring to the coincidence of interests.

Homage to the Soviet Union for having stood by India in its various hours of need is an all too familiar refrain by Indian politicians and scholars. Thus, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's eulogy to Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev upon his death in November 1982 said, "he showed a consistent understanding of our problems and stood by us in our moments of need"<sup>42</sup>.

Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, in May 1985, during his visit to USSR said that, "you have stood by us in our difficulties. It is an adversary that tests friendship and the Indian people regard the Soviet people as reliable friends"<sup>43</sup>. In an interview given to the Indian news agency, PTI, on the eve of Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the Soviet Union, Soviet President Gorbachev reiterated traditional ties of friendship and cooperation between India and Soviet Russia. He asked for a comprehensive disarmament proposal to the United States, which had included a ban on nuclear tests, moratorium on the deployment of medium range missiles and a freeze on the strategic offensive weapons. This disarmament proposal was supported by India. Gorbachev hailed the Indian initiative in securing their wider traditional support for the disarmament proposals. As he put it "we have a high opinion of these initiatives. The ideas voiced in the discussions by the heads of six countries and the Soviet initiative goes in the same direction". He had also voiced Soviet support to the Indian proposal of treating Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. "Friendship with India has always been an active tradition of our foreign policy for decades. A united, strong, peace loving India is an integral and very necessary part

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<sup>42</sup> See for details Krishan Gopal, Note 14, p.75.

<sup>43</sup> For details see Ramesh Thakur & Carlyle A. Thayer, *Soviet Relations with India and Vietnam: 1945-1992* (Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1993), p. 27.

of the modern world”, he chose to add<sup>44</sup>. In the Joint Statement issued on the occasion of Rajiv Gandhi's visit, the Soviet side had valued highly India's constructive contribution to the common efforts to ensure international peace and security and towards developing equitable cooperation among states and strengthening the unity and enhancing the international stature of the non-alignment movement. Some little known Indian freedom fighters had sent a message to Gorbachev expressing their concern over deteriorating world situation. In his reply to it Gorbachev said, “the Soviet people highly appreciate the contribution of India, a great power enjoying well deserved prestige on the international scene and described India as a recognized leader of the nonaligned movement”.

However, the Gorbachev era witnessed no significant changes in the traditional Soviet stand on the Kashmir issue. This was reflected in a comment made by the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, Mikhail Kapitsa in October 1985. He assured a Pakistani newspaper that his country wished to be friendly with all the South Asian states, but “in case of a problem between India and its neighbours, we will side with India”<sup>45</sup>.

In his notable address at Vladivostok (Soviet Union) on 28 July 1986, President Mikhail Gorbachev paid tribute to India as ‘the acknowledged leader’ of the nonaligned movement, and declared that ‘the friendly relations between the USSR and India have become a stabilizing factor on an international scale’. Gorbachev saw a willing partner in India to share his doctrine of non violence and started supporting India on various issues at international forums. Since Khrushchev's days Vladivostok had assumed a special significance. In Soviet

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<sup>44</sup> See for details J.A. Naik, Note 1, p.170.

<sup>45</sup> See for details Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 26, p.133.

Asian policy it is from here that the Soviet leaders had made important policy pronouncements on Asia. Friendly relations between the USSR and India became a stabilizing factor on a worldwide basis, Gorbachev said<sup>46</sup>.

In November 1986, Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev visited India. During his visit, Gorbachev signed the Delhi Declaration with the Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. According to Ramesh Bhandari, former Foreign Secretary of India, Delhi Declaration had “significance beyond bilateral relations”, for it was a “blue print for global existence in the future”. The Delhi Declaration became a staple of Soviet internal and international activities as illustrating Gorbachev’s new political thinking and the parallelism of Indian and Soviet outlooks on world issues. During this period, India had also been useful for demonstrating the possibility and the benefits of peaceful cooperation between countries with different political and economic systems. During his visit to India Gorbachev described the relations between the two countries as “a guiding example for others”<sup>47</sup>.

President Gorbachev in an interview to an Indonesian newspaper “Merdeka” in 1987 again described the relationship with India as ‘exemplary’. Soviet writers and speakers addressing audiences in other Third World countries similarly referred to Indo Soviet relations as a ‘model’ of Soviet relations with developing countries. India had also supported a range of international initiatives by Moscow. Indian and Soviet rhetoric on international political issues such as nuclear testing, apartheid in South Africa, the Palestinian problem, etc. and

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<sup>46</sup> See for details J.A. Naik, Note 1, p. 172.

<sup>47</sup> For details see Krishan Gopal, Note 14, p.74.

economic debate such as on capitalism as an obstacle to a new international economic order were of vital significance, often mutually reinforcing closer ties.

According to A.P. Venkateswaran, Indian Foreign Secretary during 1988, Indo-Soviet relationship was based on certain principles of mutual benefits. These were, firstly, India was the first major country to demonstrate the effectiveness of Soviet military hardware on land, sea and air battles, which encouraged Moscow to increase its military supplies to New Delhi. Secondly, Moscow and New Delhi consistently supported each other in their respective international relations. Thirdly, India and the Soviet Union discovered commonalities of international issues not involving each other, for example, anti colonialism, and opposition to apartheid.

A manifestation of the Soviet support came during the increase in tensions between India and Pakistan over the mass protests in Kashmir in 1990. In discussion with the then Indian Foreign Secretary, S.K. Singh, in Moscow, Soviet Union's Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze reiterated the Soviet stand that Kashmir was an integral part of India and supported India's determination to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. In July 1990, Indian Prime Minister V.P. Singh visited the Soviet Union. During his visit, V.P. Singh and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev agreed to renew the Indo Soviet friendship treaty for another five years. Gorbachev reiterated Soviet support for India on Kashmir issue<sup>48</sup>. Both the leaders signed a joint Indo-Soviet statement on 23 July 1990.

The Soviet leaders highly praised India's contribution to the people's struggle for peace and detente, against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism

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<sup>48</sup> For details see Soviet-Indian Statement, *Strategic Digest*, Vol. XX, No.9, September 1990, p. 2875.

and racism, and the fight against all forms of domination and inequality. They gave full support to India's foreign policy based on the principle of coexistence and non-alignment, its peaceful initiative for the strengthening of peace and stability in Asia, its constructive steps to settle conflicts in Asia, and its sober minded realism and readiness to develop relations of goodwill with other countries. Friendship and cooperation between the Soviet Union and India was a major element in the mighty front of solidarity between the socialistic and nonaligned countries that counterpoise the imperialistic aggressive forces. In this context, V.P.Singh maintained that, the Indo Soviet relation is a link between the socialistic blocs and the Third World countries.

Table – I

**Strategic Partnership between India and Soviet Union and the Role of India during  
(1947 - 1991)**

<b>Role of India</b>	<b>Soviet Era (1947-1991)</b>	<b>Russia (1991-present)</b>
Counteracting China	High	Diminished; more “discreet” (owing to thaw in Sino-Russian relations)
Foreign-policy “tool” in the global stand-off with United States	High (in maintaining Balance-Of-Power: India’s leadership of NAM created synergies in outlooks and strategies)	Changed; aid in creating multipolar international system; thereby also challenging US-centered unipolar international system
“Stabilizing” role vis-à-vis Afghanistan (1979-1989)	High	Neutralized or minimized
Crucial destination for weapons exports	High	Increased; emerging as partner in weapons production and exports
Trade and Economic Cooperation	High	Diminished greatly (Russian economic ills; high, outstanding Indian debt thus little incentive to diversify exports)
“Stabilizing” factor in Central Asia	Nonexistent to low	High
Source of advanced technology and investments	Nonexistent to low	High and growing

Source: Igor Khripunov & Anupam Srivastava, “Russian-Indian Relations: Alliances, Partnership, Or”?, *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 24, No. 2, April-June, 2005, p.171.

## **Indo – Soviet Military Relations (1947-1991)**

After the World War II, military strength was considered very important for any country to maintain its political sovereignty and territorial integrity. Due to their geostrategic and geopolitical interests, India and the Soviet Union too were inclined towards each other for military cooperation. During the post independence period, India's request for military assistance was rejected by the USA and the UK. So, India decided to approach the Soviet Union for military aid and the Soviet Union reciprocated to it.

The initial Indian approach to Moscow for arms was to counter the US policy towards the subcontinent and also symbolically to have the Soviet Union underwrite Indian defence against China. During that period, India's anti West Defence Minister Krishna Menon used his considerable political clout to develop the military relationship with Moscow<sup>49</sup>. Further, the Soviet Union had contributed to the defence of India's territorial integrity in many ways. Firstly, the Soviet Union provided political support to India on various issues. Secondly, in the times of foreign invasion, the Soviet Union supplied military hardware. Thirdly, the Soviet Union had helped India to produce them with economic and technical cooperation.

The Indo-Soviet defence preparedness started in 1955, when the Soviet Union gifted two II-14 transport aeroplanes to the Indian Air Force. The convergences in foreign policy analyzed earlier brought about an initial transfer of arms from the Soviet Union to India in the early 1960s. Self-reliance in defence was a well articulated and strongly felt aspiration in India at that time. It was

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<sup>49</sup> See for details S. Nihal Singh, "Why India Goes to Moscow for Arms", *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXIV, No.7, July 1984, p.711.

personified in the then Indian Defence Minister Krishna Menon who worked hard for its realization. He also saw the political advantage of obtaining arms from the Soviet Union to improve India's defence against China, the formal ally of the Soviet Union not yet in open breach. Again in 1960, when India asked for more of such planes, the Soviet Union complied with the request by giving 24 transport planes. In 1961, the Government of India followed up the preliminary discussions held with Soviet Marshal Zhukov by sending a delegation to Moscow, where an agreement was signed to strengthen the Indian Air Force providing with an infusion of MI-4 helicopters and AN-12 heavy transport planes<sup>50</sup>. During the Chinese attack on India in October 1962, India approached the Soviet Union for military assistance. The Soviet Union fulfilled India's requirement of MiG-21 supersonic fighter-interceptor aircraft, and at the same time, offered necessary facilities for the production of MiG-21 in India under the license of the Soviet Union. In 1962, an agreement to this effect was signed between the two countries<sup>51</sup>. During this period, the Soviet Union offered to India not only their MiG-21 supersonic fighter-interceptor planes on rupee credit, but also offered all assistance, including technical know-how, to enable its manufacture in India. The 1962 agreement provided for the sale of MiG and for the setting up of a MiG factory in India. As was expected, this agreement angered the Western capitals, particularly Washington and London. Pressure was mounted on India to sign the agreement, but the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in unmistakable terms made it clear that it was for India to decide from where to buy its defence

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<sup>50</sup> For details see Cecil Victor, "Indo - Soviet Military Cooperation: Factor for Self Reliance", in V.D.Chopra, ed., *Studies in Indo-Soviet Relations*, (patriot Publishers, New Delhi, 1986), p. 86.

<sup>51</sup> See for details Girish Mishra, "Defence-A Note" in V.B. Singh, ed., *Indo-Soviet Relations- 1947-77*, (Sterling Publisher Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1978), p. 69.

requirements<sup>52</sup>. Within two years, the area of cooperation between the Soviet Union and India in the field of defence was enlarged and given a new dimension. Indian Defence Minister V.K. Krishan Menon admitted in Indian Parliament that the US and British Government exercised pressure on Nehru to change his mind on the MiG agreement with Soviet Union. All the pulls and pressure exercised on Nehru were apparently aimed at retaining India's military dependence on the West. The Indian Prime Minister, however, took a bold step and came out in favour of the MiG deal with the USSR. This was one of the most pragmatic and well-conceived decisions taken with strictest secrecy and utmost sophistication by Nehru in the domain of foreign policy and military matters. After the Sino-Indian border war, Soviet leader N.S. Khrushchev told the Indian ambassador, T.N. Kaul on December 12, 1962, that the Soviet Union would not stand idly but gives material and political support to India<sup>53</sup>.

In 1963, India signed the agreement with the Soviet Union to acquire surface-to-air missiles, AN-12 transport aircraft, and MI-4 helicopters. In 1964, a team headed by the then Indian Defence Minister, Y.B. Chavan visited the USSR and held discussions on defence cooperation at the highest level<sup>54</sup>. Agreements were signed for Indian acquisition of 130 mm medium guns, PT -76 amphibian tanks, MiG-21 squadrons and plant and machinery for the new MiG factories.

When in 1964, India wanted to buy F-104 star-fighter from the USA, India did not get them because the USA thought that it would anger Pakistan. The USA tried to pressurise India to allow it to build its military bases. In this context, the

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<sup>52</sup> See for details T.N. Kaul, K.K. Das Gupta et. & al., *Indo-Soviet Relations: Prospects and Problems*, (Patriot Publishers, New Delhi, 1991), p. 113.

<sup>53</sup> For details see S. Nihal Singh, Note 49.

<sup>54</sup> For details see K.Subrahmanyam, "Soviet Help For Self Reliance in Defence", in Shankar Dayal Sharma, ed., *Studies in Indo-Soviet Cooperation*, (Kalamkar Prakashan Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1981), pp. 220-21.

then Defence Minister of India Y.B. Chavan said that the USA wanted “client states” but, our size, our potential strength, our tradition and heritage do not allow us to become a client state<sup>55</sup>. In 1964, a new agreement was signed between India and Soviet Union, under which India got 4 squadrons of MiG-21 helicopters, light tanks, missiles and other weapons and equipments. Again in 1964, the Soviet Union helped India to become self reliant in the defence sector. It assisted India in establishing the factories for manufacturing MiG-21 supersonic jet fighters, radar equipments and missiles. India also set up factories with Soviet cooperation to produce air-to-air missiles. The Soviet Union continued the supply of arms demanded by India. It included MiG-21, UTI trainers and SU-7B fighter bomber, K-13 Attal air-to-air missiles, SA-2 surface-to-air and surface-to-surface missile, PT-26 amphibians tanks and T-54 and T-55 main battle tanks, OT -64 armoured personnel carriers, petrol boats, frigates, submarines and motor torpedo boats.

In August 1965, after negotiations and agreements between visiting Indian Naval teams and the Soviet authorities, an agreement was concluded for the sale of F class submarines, Petya class frigates and other miscellaneous vessels<sup>56</sup>. In 1966, agreements were concluded for Sukhoi-7 fighter-bomber aircraft, T-55 medium tanks, 100 mm artilleries mobile radars, etc. This was followed by agreements for supply of missile boats, Petya class frigates, 4 submarines, MI-4 and MI-8 helicopters. In mid 1970s, the further advanced MiG-21 was also made available to India for manufacture. The MiG-21 project symbolized a long and endearing cooperation in high technology between the two countries. The cooperation was moving into a higher stage with preparations to manufacture MiG-23 aircrafts.

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<sup>55</sup> See Girish Mishra, Note 51.

<sup>56</sup> See for details K. Subrahmanyam, Note 54, pp.221-225.

In early January 1972, an Indian delegation led by Indian Minister of Defence Production, V.C. Shukla, arrived in Moscow to finalize the production of the improved version of MiG-21 fighter planes in India and to procure new defence equipment for the Indian army. A month later, the Chief of Staff of the Indian Army General Manekshaw visited the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Soviet Minister of Defence. Welcoming him Marshal Grechko of Soviet Union praised the Indian army for its role in the liberation of Bangladesh, its fine fighting qualities and combat worthiness, and indicated that the Soviet Union wanted to see India as an unchallenged military power in South Asia. He said that he was happy that “close co-operation” between the leadership of the Soviet and Indian defence forces had become an element of the new relationship following the Soviet-Indian treaty<sup>57</sup>. This had become a “bulwark” and a “guarantee” to peace in the subcontinent. In March, General Yefimov, first Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Air force, arrived in India at the invitation of the Chief of the Indian Air Force, Air Marshal Lal. In April the Commander of Chief of the Soviet Navy Admiral Sergei Gorshkov accompanied by four senior navel officers came to India to discuss Soviet assistance for the expansion of India’s navel power. During his ten-day sojourn, he met Indian Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram, Chief of the Staff of Indian Navy Admiral Nanda, and discussed Soviet aid to develop India as a strong naval power. In July, India’s Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram went to Moscow to discuss Soviet assistance for the Indian defence forces, especially Soviet aid in developing a “strong Indian navy”. The Soviets assured Jagjivan Ram that they would provide India with new and more ships and train Indian personnel in the Soviet Union<sup>58</sup>. Meanwhile, high-level exchanges in Soviet-Indian relations

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<sup>57</sup> For details see Hemen Ray, *The Enduring Friendship Soviet-Indian Relations in Mrs. Gandhi’s Days*, (Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1989), p.45.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid

continued. The Chief of the Indian Navy, Admiral Nanda, arrived in Moscow at the invitation of the Soviet Government. In the Soviet capital he held talks with Marshal Greshko, Admiral Gorshkov and other military leaders on the development of Indian navy. He also visited Volgograd, Sevastopol, Leningrad and the Crimea. Shortly thereafter, a delegation from the Indian National Defence College led by Major-General Batra visited the Soviet Union for talks with Soviet military leaders. In 1972, the cooperation between India and Soviet Union continued to be sustained in the defence field. Some of the major items of weapons transferred to India were Nanuchka class missile corvettes, the Kashin class destroyers, the T -72 tanks, the BMP infantry combat vehicles, SAM-6 missiles, the MiG-21 Bis, the MiG-23 and MiG-25 aircrafts. In December 1972, the Soviet Union agreed to supply India with a number of submarines and patrol boats to strengthen Indian navy.

During Moraji Desai's government in 1978, India negotiated the 1.6 billion dollar arms deal with the Soviet Union. According to the agreement, for the first time India got MiG-25 aircrafts. In July 1973 Indian Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram went to the Soviet Union to discuss India's security and defence requirements with the Soviet leaders. In Moscow, Jagjivan Ram held talks with Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin on further development of Indo-Soviet co-operation "in the spirit of the treaty signed in August 1971" and with Defence Minister Marshal Grechko on India's need for defence materials. In the course of his talks with the Soviet leaders, Jagjivan Ram pointed out that India and the Soviet Union were "close friends " and the treaty of friendship and co-operation was meant "to help each other whenever necessary". The Soviets promptly agreed to grant India more

economic aid and sophisticated Soviet weapons to make India an economically and militarily strong nation in Asia<sup>59</sup>.

In April 1974, an Indian military delegation led by Narain, Secretary of the Defence Ministry, went to Moscow for talks with the Soviet military leaders for new Soviet military aid to India. In the course of his sojourn in the Soviet Union, Narain held talks with General Sokolovski, first Deputy Minister of Defence and Marshal Grechko and received assurances of new Soviet military assistance to New Delhi. In India, Admiral Kohli, Chief of the Naval Staff laid the foundation stone for the electrical and maintenance workshop for the navy at Vishakhapatnam with Soviet assistance.

On February 24, 1975, the United States announced the lifting of arms embargo from Pakistan amidst India's opposition and denunciations. The next day Marshal Grechko accompanied by Commander-in Chief of the Soviet Navy Admiral, Sergei Gorchkov, and Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Air Force, Air Marshal Pavel Kutakhov, arrived in India for a three-day visit. On the same day Grenchko held talks with Indian Defence Minister Swaran Singh on various aspects of the military and logistics situation connected with India's security and the latest development in the region, including military build up in the Persian gulf area and Pakistan. The following day he had a talk with Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. He also delivered a personal message to Mrs. Gandhi from Leonid Brezhnev, containing "an expression of good wishes for the further expansion of Soviet-Indian relations for the good of the peoples of both countries". Marshal Grechko also held talks with Indian Foreign Minister Y.V. Chavan and further talks with Indian Defence Minister Swaran Singh. The Soviet Defence

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<sup>59</sup> See for details Hemen Ray, Note 57, p.60.

Minister later said that his talks with the Indian leaders had been “pleasant and useful”. He had come to the conclusion that his visit had further strengthened the friendly relations between the peoples and armed forces of the Soviet Union and India<sup>60</sup>. The Soviet people regarded India as a good neighbour and a trusted friend. The joint communiqué issued at the end of Marshal Grechko’s visit said that the Soviet Defence Minister had been impressed with the progress made by India in different fields and highly assessed the peaceful foreign policy and her efforts to achieve self-reliance. Both sides highly assessed the steadfast friendship and growing co-operation between the two countries and stated that the Soviet-Indian friendship was an important factor not only for strengthening peace and stability in Asia but also throughout the world. Both sides also noted with satisfaction that the visit of the Soviet Defence Minister has significantly contributed to further strengthening friendship and understanding between the peoples of India and the Soviet Union. Both sides also express their grave anxiety at the actions taken by certain quarters (the United States and China) to step up arms race in the region.

In 1980s, an agreement with the Soviet Union was signed by the erstwhile Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and the decision was in favour of supplying the MiG-31 to India. Foregoing production plans for the Mirage-2000 was a reassurance to Moscow that New Delhi would not take its diversification plans too far. She maintained that India would continue to try to balance major purchases from the Soviet Union with symbolic, if not substantive, purchases from the West. As Indian Foreign Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao told in New Delhi in

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid, p.73.

October 1983, “I have told the Soviets, we will continue to buy arms from others. We are nonaligned”<sup>61</sup>.

Soviet Defense Minister Ustinov made a 6-day official visit to New Delhi in March 1982. Backed by a formidable delegation of Soviet military officers whose size was described as unprecedented, an eager Ustinov attempted to nullify the impending arms deal with France by offering India the latest generation of military hardware at what was generally described as cut-rate prices and soft terms. Among the weapons that Moscow was prepared to supply India were the T-82 tank and advanced MiG-27 tactical fighter bomber. The latter was said to be equivalent to or better than the French Mirage 2000 then under consideration. In December 1982, an Indo-Soviet agreement was signed for collaboration on design and manufactured naval vessels and for submarines such as the Tango class capable of firing anti ship rockets. In April 1983, India and the Soviet Union confirmed the transfer of six hundred T -72 tanks and agreed the sale of armored personnel carriers. In the same year India ordered a large number of Soviet transport aircrafts, the AN-32.

In July 1983, the Indian Navy ordered new Soviet frigates and destroyers as part of a long term modernization plan subsequently unveiled in October 1983<sup>62</sup>. In October 1983, the Soviet Union and India held high level talks on a major arms deal under the terms of which the Soviet Union agreed to supply India with the latest version of MiG aircraft, tanks, missiles and other weapons. Included in the transaction was the MiG-31, the Soviet’s latest fighter plane planned for manufacture in the next few years. Though still on the drawing boards, the

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<sup>61</sup> See for details P.V. Narasimha Rao’s conversation with S. Nihal Singh, Note 49, p.720.

<sup>62</sup> For details see Ian Anthony, “Soviet - Indian Defence Cooperation”, in *Rusi and Brassey’s Defence Year Book - 1988*, ed. by The Royal United Services Institute For Defence Studies, (Brassey’s Defence Publisher, England, 1998), p.227.

Russians indicated that they will supply it to India when it has been successfully flight tested. Meanwhile the MiG-29, known as the Fulcrum, was to be supplied to India with licensing rights to manufacture this highly sophisticated fighter plane. The Soviets also agreed to supply the T-80 tanks, the latest to have undergone successful field trials. Many of India's existing armored regiments were said to be using the T-72 which were expected to be gradually replaced by the T-80.

In 1984, during the visit of Soviet Defence Minister Marshal Ustinov to New Delhi, the Soviet Union agreed that Soviet vessels bought by India would be fitted with advanced surveillance and sensory systems. In 1985, discussions between Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow led to the exploration of a new dimension in defence cooperation. Soviet experts showed to Mr. Rajiv Gandhi the satellite photographs of Pakistani deployments and particularly the placement of new American supplied weapons. During that period a delegation led by Defence Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao began to discuss exchange of information and collaboration in the development of spy satellites<sup>63</sup>.

### **Indo - Soviet Union Economic Cooperation (1947-1991)**

Foreign trade plays a vital role in the economic development of a country. India is a developing country in close proximity with the take off stage of economic development. At this stage, a country requires machinery, capital goods, maintenance imports and raw materials for its rapid development. Foreign trade assists in this regard, to a great extent. Expansion of foreign trade therefore, is very essential for accelerating the process of economic development. Trade is always a

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<sup>63</sup> See The Hindustan Times, April 9, 1985.

two-way traffic. Trade relations between the two trading partners can grow on the basis of appreciation of each other's needs and limitations. Any amount of expansion of trade between the two parties, which cannot supplement each other's needs, will not really achieve the objective. So long as trade is not complementary and is unable to supply the goods and services which one party wants from the other, useful and lasting trade relations are not possible.

India's economic relations with the USSR may be divided into five stages. In the first stage from independence until the mid 1950s, there was virtually no trade between the two countries. In the second stage from the mid 1950s to the early 1960s, there occurred within the framework of special bilateral arrangements intensive economic technical cooperation in the construction of huge capital intensive enterprises in India's nascent public sector and consequently trade flows increased. The third stage was marked by several Soviet assisted projects in India coming on stream. Stagnation or at least a plateauing of Indo-Soviet trade set in from the late 1970s until the early 1980s. The fifth stage since the mid 1980s was characterized by Indian Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and Soviet President Mr. Gorbachev led determination to rejuvenate bilateral trade by broadening and deepening economic, scientific and technical cooperation.

The economic relations between Soviet Union and India have been built on the principles of mutual benefits and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. The Soviet economic assistance has no strings nor is it used to influence the direction of the internal policies of India by laying down "conditionalities". If the Soviet Union helps India to build basic and heavy industries, India has found a new and stable market in the Soviet Union for its traditional export items such as tea, jute articles, coffee, spices, tobacco, and leather goods. With the industrialisation

of the country, India has also started exporting manufactured and semi-manufactured goods to the Soviet Union, such as pig iron, accumulators and power cables. Another new area of India's exports to the Soviet Union is consumer goods such as hosiery, cotton and woollen fabrics, garments, handicrafts, linen and some of the herbal medicines. Thus with industrialisation the pattern of the Indo-Soviet trade too has started changing. The Indo-Soviet economic co-operation is based on certain basic principles which are:

1. Indo-Soviet trade relations have been based on the principle of equality and mutual benefit.
2. Indian currency rupee has been accepted for the purpose of calculating the total trade turn over and thus imposed no foreign exchange burden on India.
3. They offer maximum opportunity to the two countries to develop their trade.
4. The novel scheme of production cooperation between the two countries in the fourth trade agreement seemed to be primarily intended to help India tide over her difficulties arising out of the limited availability of foreign exchange and to overcome the teething troubles of nascent industries. Thus, through trade the Soviet Union tried to render economic assistance to India.
5. The trade agreements provided stability in Indo-Soviet trading relations. This has been one of the most important features of Indo-Soviet trade. They ensured India about the quantity of goods to be exported to the Soviet Union in advance and enabled her to buy capital goods and equipments as well as other items required by her plans of economic development. This

worked both as a preventive against import of non essential items as well as an element of certainty in her exports.

6. The Soviet economic system has been free from the uneven and cyclical changes faced by the capitalist countries. Moreover it assured India of firm demand and stable prices of her products. In this way, it made possible for India to enlist foreign trade as a mechanism of economic development in her national plan.
7. The Soviet Union neither seeks any indirect trade privileges nor any advantages other than those agreed upon in the trade agreements. And it does not oppose the measures India wishes to take in order to protect her economy from foreign competition.
8. The shipping arrangements between the two countries also save a lot of foreign exchange for India.
9. They also intend to jointly cultivate markets in the third world countries which go to expand the base of India's foreign trade in those countries.
10. Trade and economic relations with Soviet Union have influenced Western countries to make certain concessions to India in their trade and economic relations. Based on direct government to government contacts, the entire earnings from export and import operations of Indo-Soviet trade accrue to the Indian government.

In such a situation economic cooperation with the Soviet Union seems to serve two very useful purposes. First, it is an alternative source for technological assistance, especially for arms and other industries in which cooperation from the advanced capitalist countries cannot be counted upon. Secondly, Indo-Soviet cooperation

both political and economic provides a cushion against excessive pressures from the advanced capitalist countries for economic, political and above all military subservience.

The Indo-Soviet Trade relations have shown that India enjoyed certain distinct advantages in her trade relations with the USSR. This enabled India to solve many of her problems faced in the course of trading relations with the rest of the world. Firstly, India does not have Balance of Payment problem with the USSR. Trade agreements based on non-convertible rupee payments facility have successfully avoided them; while on the contrary, India had to face the problem of huge deficits in her trade with the rest of the world. Secondly, India had accumulated trade surpluses in her trade with the USSR which obliged the latter to supply more sophisticated and necessary items so badly needed by India to pursue her developmental programmes. Thirdly, in their trade relations, both the countries provide Most Favoured Nations (MFN) treatment to each other in custom duties and other taxes that helped India to increase her exports to Soviet Union. Fourthly, Indo-Soviet growing trade relations also helped India to diversify her trade with other East European countries also, who after being influenced by the successful implementation of the non-convertible rupee payment trade relationship with the Soviet Union concluded such agreements with India. Fifthly, phenomenal growth and consequent diversification of India's trade with the Soviet Union and her East European COMECON (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) allies strengthened India's bargaining position with the rest of the world. It ended India's full dependence on western markets for her import needs and opened up new vistas for her exports, traditional as well as manufactured non traditional exports. This trade relationship enabled India to stand in good stead and now India finds herself

in a better position to claim for better terms of trade in the Sterling and Dollar areas.

Starting with a modest trade turnover of Rs 1.56 crore in 1950-51, the Indo-Soviet trade registered a phenomenal and impressive growth at Rs 7803 crore in 1990-91<sup>64</sup>. As a result, total trade turnover between the two countries increased from 0.12 per cent of India's total trade in 1950-51 to a peak of 11.63 per cent in 1980-81, and marginally dropped to 11.45 per cent in 1990-91. While India's exports to USSR grew from 0.22 per cent in 1950-51 to a peak of 21.28 per cent during 1981-82, India's imports from USSR rose from 0.034 per cent to 8.36 per cent during the period. The decade of 1980s experienced wide fluctuations both in India's exports and imports. By the year 1990-1991 while the exports dipped to 16.14 per cent, imports declined to 6.05 percent. The sluggishness in the trade could be attributed to collapsing prices of oil and oil products that created difficulties in Indo-Soviet trade and settlement. By a trade agreement concluded in late 1949 the Soviet government supplied India about less than a quarter million tons of wheat.

The first step to promote Indo-Soviet trade was taken in 1950 when the two countries signed a regular sea communications agreement<sup>65</sup>. This was followed in 1951 by a barter deal under which the Soviet Union agreed to send three shiploads of wheat to relieve the serious food shortages then being faced by India. This was in exchange for tea and jute. From mid1950s, Soviet-Indian trade began expanding. Compared to 1953, it grew by 30 times at the beginning of 1960s.

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<sup>64</sup> See for details R.K.Wadhwa, "Economic Cooperation Between India and Russia" in V.D. Chopra ed., *Global Significance of Indo-Russian Strategic Relationship*, (Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2005)p.200

<sup>65</sup> For details see R.K. Sharma "USSR-A Reliable Trade Partner of India", in R.K. Sharma ed., *The Economics of Indo-Soviet Trade*, (Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1979), p.85.

The first five-year Indo-Soviet trade agreement was concluded on 2 December 1953. The agreement provided for maximum opportunities for the development of trade relations between the two countries on the principle of equality and mutual benefit<sup>66</sup>. It provided that India was not obliged to pay for her imports either in gold or in hard currencies. The Soviet exports had to be balanced by imports from India. The shipping arrangements were to be made in such a way that no country had to incur any foreign exchange expenditure. Under the terms of this agreement, the USSR agreed to provide several types of machinery and equipments required to launch a programme of industrialisation on a large scale. This trade agreement marked the beginning of greater economic cooperation between the two countries and was further strengthened by the economic agreement of 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1955, under which the Soviet Union offered the first long-term credit of Rs.647.4 million for meeting the cost of importing machinery and know how for setting up the first public sector steel plant at Bhilai. The trade agreement of 1953, along with the economic agreement of 1955, created a congenial atmosphere in which the trade relationship between the two countries developed rapidly.

The most impressive development in Indo-Soviet trade was witnessed in 1955-56 when India's imports rose from \$ 5.2 million to \$ 26.2 million and exports increased from \$ 6.4 million to \$ 31.3 million over the one year span. In 1958 India's imports from the USSR valued at \$ 45.6 million constituted nearly 1.8 per cent of its total imports. Exports to the USSR in 1958 totalled about \$ 49 million or 4.2 per cent of India's overall exports. The percentage increase in Indo-Soviet trade from 1953 to 1959 was very impressive. It was, according to Soviet statistician, fifteen fold increase from 1951 to 1959.

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<sup>66</sup> See details Ajit Kumar Mitra "Some Aspects of Indo-Soviet Trade Relations:1953-54 to 1975-76", Note 65, p.2.

The second agreement was concluded in 1958. This agreement added a new dimension to the Indo-Soviet trade and became popularly known as the first 'Rupee Trade Agreement'<sup>67</sup>. This agreement was mutually advantageous and enabled India to import from the Soviet Union essential items of economic development like machinery, capital equipment and other materials on a large scale on rupee payment basis. This enabled India to expand and diversify her exports to the Soviet Union. It also enabled the Soviet Union to purchase various agricultural and industrial raw materials and consumer goods required by her from India through payment in Indian rupees against the fund generated by the USSR through the commodities imported by India from the Soviet Union. The immediate impact of the new agreement was to stimulate the exports of India to the Soviet Union and to overcome the trade deficit with that country. Under the first trade agreement (1953-1958) Indian exports to the Soviet Union consisted mainly of 5 or 6 commodity groups, whereas under the second agreement Indian exports increased to 40 groups of commodities. Thus, from a position of a net importer for the previous five years, India became a net exporter to the Soviet Union for the next five years.

In the 1960s India became the USSR's most important trading partner among the developing nations<sup>68</sup>. Though India's main trading partners in the early 1960s were still the UK, the US and Japan, the percentage of India's trade with the Soviet Union and the East European communist countries continued to increase. By 1963-64, the USSR ranked fourth behind these nations in total trade with India but in 1965-66 the Soviet Union replaced Japan at the third rank.

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>68</sup> See for details Shri Ram Sharma, *India-USSR Relations 1947-71: From Ambivalence to Steadfastness*, (Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi, 1999), p.61.

The third trade agreement between the two countries signed in June 1963 was extended up to 1970 as India's fourth five year plan was delayed for three years. The agreement called for an average annual increase during 1964-68 that was double of the 1962 volume of trade. In 1962-63 the total trade came to Rs. 86.89 crores whereas in 1968-69 it shot up to Rs. 340.09 crores. In 1964, 29.8 per cent of Soviet exports to developing countries went to India while 23.5 per cent of its imports came from India. In February 1968, a contract was signed under which 6 lakh tons of Indian steel produced at Bhilai Steel plant would be delivered to Russia over a three-year period. It was for the first time that Soviet Union began to purchase Indian steel products. During Russian Minister Kosygin's visit in January 1968, order for 4000 wagons was placed with the Steel Authority of India<sup>69</sup>.

The fourth trade agreement was concluded on 26 December 1970. Besides continuing the efforts of the earlier three agreements in promoting and diversifying trade between the two countries, it contained two clauses that provided for immense opportunities for exploring new avenues of industrial cooperation and joint cooperation in third world countries. The visit of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. L.I. Brezhnev to India in November 1973 further strengthened the trade relationship between the two countries. The agreement concluded between the two countries at that time provided suitable measures to expand trade by 1.5 to 2 times by 1980. Besides, a new dimension was added in the trade relationship between the two countries when a scheme known as 'production cooperation' was introduced<sup>70</sup>. This scheme was primarily intended to help India to tide over her difficulties arising out of the limited availability of foreign exchange and to overcome the teething troubles of

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid, p.62

<sup>70</sup> See details Ajit Kumar Mitra, Note 65, p. 4.

nascent industries. Under this scheme of 'production cooperation', the Soviet Union would supply machinery, equipment and technical know-how to set up a particular industry or enterprise. When it would go into production, the credit extended by the Soviet Union would be repaid in terms of the products of that industry or enterprise. When the credit would be fully repaid, it would be left to the discretion of the Government of India to decide whether or not the supply of the products would be continued to the Soviet Union. If the supply would be continued, the terms and conditions of supply would be negotiated afresh. This new scheme gave a further stimulus to the trade between the two countries.

The fourth trade agreement was signed in December 1970 which provided for 15 per cent of annual growth in both imports to and exports from the Soviet Union. The agreement was significant in two respects: it provided for a collaboration for increasing the industrial production in the two countries in selected sectors taking into account the mutual requirements; it also provided for setting up of joint ventures in the third world countries both for expansion of trade and also for developing economic relations with them<sup>71</sup>. From 1950 to 1970 there was a rapid expansion of trade between the two countries. The value of Indian imports from the Soviet Union increased from Rs. 62.1 million in 1955-56 to Rs. 1713.3 million in 1969-70. The value of Indian exports to the Soviet Union increased from Rs. 32.6 million to Rs. 1736.7 million during this period. In the period from 1953 to 1971 India had a favourable trade balance with the Soviet Union.

In May 1972 a protocol of Indo-Soviet trade was signed. It was an extension of the fourth trade agreement of 1970. The Soviet Union agreed to

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<sup>71</sup> See for details Shri Ram Sharma, Note 68, p. 63.

supply such commodities as coffee, zinc, kerosene and fertilizers, etc. which the US had stopped supplying during the Bangladesh war. In September 1972, India, and the Soviet Union signed agreement formally establishing an inter-governmental commission on economic, scientific and technical cooperation whose main task was to discover ways of further expanding Indo-Soviet cooperation<sup>72</sup>. The commission, which was decided upon during former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to Moscow in 1971, was to meet at least once in a year alternately in Moscow and New Delhi.

By 1973, the Soviet Union had emerged as the second largest trading partner of India, accounting for 13 per cent of the latter's exports. In December 1973, India signed a fifteen-year economic treaty with Moscow during a visit by Soviet Communist Party leader Leonid Brezhnev<sup>73</sup>. The Kremlin had offered assistance for a number of vital spheres of the Indian economy, including steel, fertilizers, food, oil and mineral exploration. The two states also agreed to make their live-year economic plans complementary.

The year 1975 marked the twentieth anniversary of Indo-Soviet economic cooperation and in January 1976 the trade representative of the Soviet Union in New Delhi stated that currently India was the top trade partner of the USSR among Third World nations.

The fifth trade agreement for five years between the two countries was signed in New Delhi on 15 April 1976. According to this agreement, the total Indo-Soviet trade turnover was to reach Rs.93.5 crore by 1980, that is, more than 100% of the trade turnover achieved by the end of 1973.

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<sup>72</sup> For details see M.A. Zafar Shah, *India and the Superpowers: India's Political Relations with the Superpowers in the 1970s*, (Vikas Publishing House PVT. Ltd., New Delhi, 1983), p.146.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, p.147

To sum up, the important features of Indo-Soviet trade agreements were firstly, the agreements offered the two countries the maximum opportunity for developing trade on the principle of equality and mutual benefit. Secondly, they stipulated the form of repayment without resorting to foreign exchange. Besides, the rupee was accepted as the currency for the calculation of the total trade turnover. Finally, through trade, the Soviet Union tried to render economic assistance to India.

From the above analysis of the important provisions of the various Indo-Soviet trade agreements and from the volume and composition of trade between the two countries during the past 25 years, it appears that the trade relationship enabled India to solve some of her important economic problems. Some of these may be listed as below:

First, the Indo-Soviet bilateral trade agreements based on nonconvertible rupee payments avoided the complicated problem associated with the balance of trade. Under these agreements imports from the USSR were automatically adjusted against exports. The imports of raw materials (e.g., non-ferrous metals, petroleum products), capital goods and fertilisers from the USSR caused no strain on the limited foreign exchange resources of India. In the mid 1950s when India was confronted with acute shortage of foreign exchange and found it extremely difficult to import capital goods from the dollar and sterling area countries to implement her development plans, these agreements enabled India to import capital goods from the Soviet Union on easy terms and pursue her economic development loans. The Indo-Soviet trade agreements, thus, helped India to build a sound industrial base. Besides, the import of fertilisers and agricultural machinery like tractors in large quantities from the USSR also helped to develop Indian agriculture. The import of fertilisers from the USSR had increased considerably in the later years. It was only

23.4 thousand tonnes in 1959 (that is, the year in which the import of fertilisers from the USSR started) and increased to 60 thousand tonnes in 1965, to 100.5 thousand tonnes in 1970 and to 277.3 thousand tonnes in 1975. The steady increase in the import of fertilisers from the USSR met to a considerable extent the growing requirement of fertilisers in India and also contributed greatly to the agricultural development of the country. Again as payments for imports were to be made in terms of non convertible Indian rupee and imports were to be adjusted against exports, the Soviet Union had to make large-scale purchases of Indian goods and commodities which included many non traditional items of exports like plastic goods, light engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, etc. Thus, the mechanism of the Indo-Soviet bilateral trade and payments agreement was such that it provided markets for the products of the newly established industries of India and helped considerably to diversify the composition and direction of Indian exports. Secondly, these agreements laid down that the contracting parties would give the most favoured nation treatment to one another in customs duties and other taxes. No restrictions would be put from either side on imports or exports of goods. This provision also enabled India to push up the exports of her manufactured products to the USSR. For example, in 1953-54 about 75% of exports of India to the USSR consisted of primary commodities and textiles. In 1975-76, on the other hand, about 60% of the total exports of India to the USSR consisted of manufactured goods. Thirdly, the Indo-Soviet trade relationship based on non-convertible rupee payment prompted other socialist countries of East Europe to conclude similar trade agreements with India. This helped to diversify the direction and composition of Indian exports. As a result, a new spurt was given to the production machinery in both primary and secondary sectors. Finally, the bilateral trade agreements and the consequent diversification in the direction of trade strengthened the bargaining

position of India and enabled her to some extent to claim better terms of trade from countries in the dollar and sterling areas.

The growing tempo and vitality of Indo-Soviet economic cooperation were pre eminently reflected in the high level agreements signed during Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the Soviet Union in May 1985 which was a landmark in the history of Indo-Soviet relations. Long-term perspectives were set and new types of cooperation envisaged. Basic directions were given to economic, trade and scientific and technical cooperation for the next fifteen years. The agreement provided for the introduction of vanguard technologies, attainment of improved levels of production and productivity modernisation, and reconstruction in mutually agreed areas, construction of new projects, and training of technical personnel and development of new types of equipment, technological processes and industrial research programmes. This is how a new dimension was added to the cooperation between the two countries with the signing of an agreement in May 1985 by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and General Secretary of the CPSU Gorbachev, which provides for the next two decades the main directions of economic, scientific and technical cooperation<sup>74</sup>. It provided a framework for growth in the long term perspective. Along with the cooperation agreement, an agreement for a credit of 1000 million roubles for projects was also concluded. This lent a further momentum to the ongoing cooperation in the core areas of steel, power generation, oil and natural gas and coal for which some projects had already been identified and others were being examined. This is yet another aspect of the significance of Indo-Soviet economic cooperation in the eighties.

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<sup>74</sup> See for details P.N. Haksar, T.N.Kaul et.& al., *Studies in Indo-Soviet Relations*, (Patriot Publishers, New Delhi, 1986), p.163.

The pattern of India's trade with the Soviet Union was on the lines of trade of an under developed country with an industrially advanced country. The major difference in this case was that for sheer political reasons, the Soviet Union was keen to prevent the economy of an under developed country from getting integrated and subordinated to the advanced economy of an advanced capitalist country.

To conclude, the two conspicuous features of Indo-Soviet trade were that the trade between the two countries was to be carried on in Indian rupees and imports and exports of both countries were to balance each other. Thus the question of involving foreign currency was eliminated and the problem of imbalance between imports and exports of India were solved. Under this system the Soviet Union exported capital goods in the form of big machines, technical know-how and certain raw materials required for setting up new manufacturing plants. Usually the prices of these goods would have gone in convertible currency that is common currency to which the currencies of India and Russia were linked but the Soviet Union got it in rupees. That means whatever export earnings accrued to the Soviet Union it had to spend them on purchasing goods in Indian market.

Table – II

**Five Year Trade Agreements between India and the Soviet Union (1947-1991)**

Trade Agreements	Imports From Soviet Union	Export to Soviet Union	(Rs Crore)Total Trade
First Agreement (1953-1958)	124	53	117
Second Agreement (1958-1963)	242	198	440
Third Agreement (1963-1970)	902	1024	1926
Fourth Agreement (1970-1975)	888	1953	2481
Fifth Agreement (1975-1980)	2725	3033	5888
Sixth Agreement (1980-1985)	8235	8393	16628

Source: Director General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Kolkata

Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India

Table – III

**Trends in Indo-Soviet Bilateral Trade Relations (1950-51 to 1990-91)**

(Value: in Rs. Crore)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Exports</b>	<b>% Share</b>	<b>Imports</b>	<b>% Share</b>	<b>Total Trade Turnover</b>
1950-51	1	0.22	0.22	0.034	1.56
1951-52	7	0.95	1	0.11	8
1952-53	1	0.17	0.24	0.036	1.24
1953-54	1	0.19	1	0.17	2
1954-55	2	0.34	2	0.30	4
1955-56	3	0.49	6	0.78	9
1956-57	16	2.58	17	1.88	33
1957-58	17	2.68	24	2.32	41
1958-59	26	4.54	17	1.88	43
1959-60	30	4.69	17	1.77	47
1960-61	29	4.52	16	1.43	45
1961-62	32	4.84	40	3.66	72

1962-63	38	5.55	60	5.31	98
1963-64	52	6.56	68	5.56	120
1964-65	78	9.56	79	5.86	157
1965-66	93	11.54	83	5.89	176
1966-67	125	10.80	112	5.39	237
1967-68	122	10.18	112	5.58	234
1968-69	148	10.90	192	10.06	340
1969-70	176	12.46	171	10.81	347
1970-71	210	13.68	105	6.43	315
1971-72	209	13.00	87	4.77	296
1972-73	305	15.47	114	6.11	419
1973-74	286	11.34	254	8.60	540
1974-75	421	12.65	409	9.05	830
1975-76	417	10.32	310	5.89	727
1976-77	454	8.83	316	6.23	770
1977-78	657	12.15	446	7.41	1103
1978-79	411	7.18	471	6.92	882
1979-80	638	9.94	824	9.01	1462

1980-81	1226	18.27	1014	8.08	2240
1981-82	1661	21.28	1137	8.36	2789
1982-83	1558	17.70	1513	10.59	3071
1983-84	1305	13.36	1659	10.48	2964
1984-85	1867	15.90	1788	10.44	3655
1985-86	1986	18.23	1677	8.53	3663
1986-87	1860	14.94	1006	5.01	2866
1989-88	1963	12.52	1608	7.23	3571
1988-89	2609	12.90	1258	4.46	3867
1989-90	4463	16.14	2038	5.77	6501
1990-91	5255	16.14	2548	6.05	7803

Source: Director General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Kolkata

Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India

Table – IV

**Principal Commodities Exported by India to Soviet Union (1947-1991)**

Serial No	commodities
1	Tea
2	Oil Cakes
3	Cashew nuts
4	Tobacco Unmanufactured
5	Cotton Piece- Goods
6	Spices
7	Jute Goods-Gunny Cloth
8	Coffee
9	Jute-Sacking
10	Leather/ Leather Manufactures
11	Engineering Goods/ Machinery Equipments

Source: Director General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Kolkata

Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India

Table- V

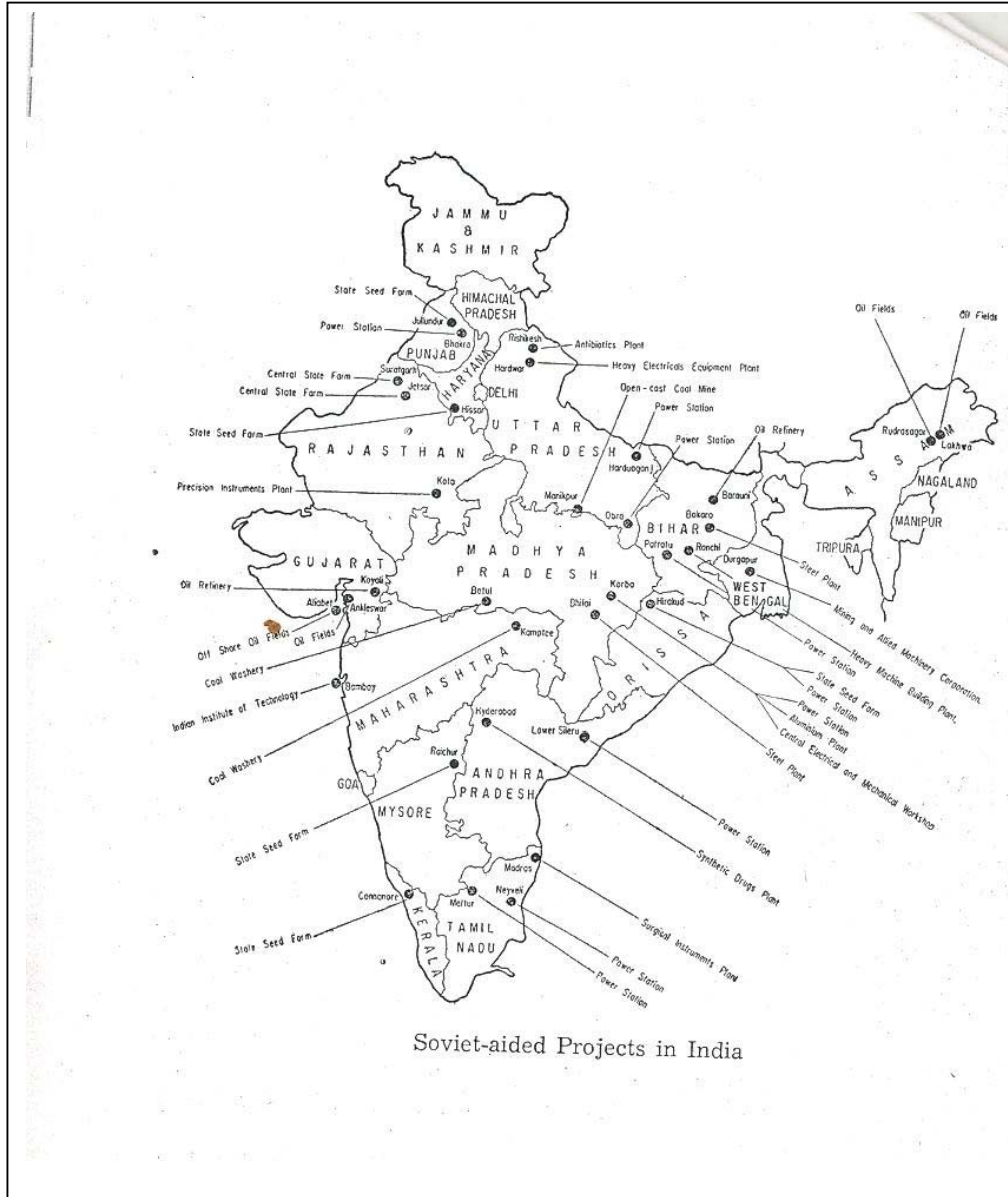
**Principal Commodities Imported by India from Soviet Union (1947-1991)**

Serial No	commodities
1	Iron and Steel
2	Electrical Machinery
3	Transport Machinery
4	Petroleum Products
5	News Prints
6	Chemical Elements
7	Medical and Pharmaceutical Products
8	Machine tools
9	Asbestos
10	Nitrogenous Fertilizer
11	Rolled Steel Machinery Equipments

Source: Director General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Kolkata

Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India

## SOVIET UNION AIDED PROJECTS IN INDIA (1953-1991)



Source: Commerce Research Bureau, "Soviet Aided Projects" in Vadilal Dagli, ed., *Indo-Soviet Economic Relations- A Survey*, (Vora & Co Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Bombay, 1971), p. 59.

Indo-Russia strategic co-operation though very much important from recent point of view is not a new phenomenon. Before India's independence in 1947, both India and the Soviet Union were looking towards each other for co-operation. The Soviet Union had supported India's struggle for independence. So the Soviet Union always dear to India in regard to foreign policy. Starting from a cautious beginning in the early fifties and subsequently passing through several phases of multi-faceted cooperation spanning across a long period of four decades, the political relations between India and the USSR have influenced the contemporary events of bilateral, regional and international significance.

The Soviet Union is the first major power to have recognized the policy of non-alignment, espoused so ardently by India. In its turn, New Delhi has appreciated the policy of peaceful co-existence, practiced consistently by the Soviets in the field of their foreign relations. The success of Indo-Soviet political relationship can thus be ascribed to the identical nature of some of the basic principles of their foreign policy and to the convergence of their vital interests. Relations between these two countries at the same time are conditioned by the interaction of a variety of geopolitical and strategic factors. A close scrutiny of political ties between New Delhi and Moscow shows that on several important issues like colonialism, imperialism, racism, peace and disarmament both the sides have reacted almost identically. Their approaches to problems like China's recognition and admission to the UN, war in Korea, conflict in Indo-China, crisis in the Middle East and several other important international issues have brought them quite nearer. The Soviets have lent support to India's sponsorship of the Bandung meet and appreciated her role in the Geneva Conference. New Delhi's refusal to be drawn into the network of the alliance system of the West has been

recognized by Moscow as a proof of its determination to steer clear off the Cold War. Both the countries have held a common approach on important matters like world wide extension of detente, use of atom for peace and nuclear disarmament. Their views on issues like the declaration of the Indian Ocean as zone of peace, dismantling of military bases on foreign territories, liquidation of military pacts and a host of other important matters are by and large similar.

After independence, when Jawaharlal Nehru was Prime Minister of India, he was quite impressed with the Soviet pattern of socialism. Nehru was interested to practice socialistic pattern of society in India. Nehru put the sage of friendship forward in a new direction. He adopted socialism and five year plans for India's economic development. After independence, India was weak in terms of economic and military strength. So, India was approaching the West for co-operation. But, unfortunately the Western countries out rightly rejected India's approach for co-operation. At that time, the Soviet Union came forward with a helping hand and extended co-operation in economic and military sphere. So, Indo-Soviet friendship grew stronger day by day. India and the Soviet Union shared a warm co-operation in strategic sphere as both the countries shared common geopolitical interests and problems. During Goa liberation days, when the West opposed India, it was the Soviet Union who stood and advocated in favour of India. The Soviet Union had also supported India's stand on Kashmir issue at various international fora. The Soviet Union co-operated India with valuable diplomatic and military support during the Chinese aggression in 1962 and during the Indo-Pak war in 1965 and 1971. The attitude of the West towards vital issues like Kashmir, Goa as well as, the crisis in Bangladesh has been out and out hostile to India. By backing India's just claims on Kashmir and Goa and by supporting her stand on the Bangladesh issue, the Soviets have earned her goodwill. The West has tried to complicate the

Kashmir issue under the garb of proposals like plebiscite, demilitarization and UN assistance with a view to propping up Pakistan against India. On the other hand, the USSR has taken a fair stand by recognizing Kashmir as an integral part of India. In addition to using several vetoes in the Security Council to stall anti-India resolutions; Moscow has been forthright in lending its support to New Delhi on the Kashmir issue. Similarly India has received overwhelming support from the USSR on the issue of Goa.

The Soviet Union co-operated India and maintained strategic and military relations with India because it wanted to counter the presence of the USA and China in the South Asia subcontinent. US military and diplomatic support to Pakistan made the subcontinent a pitch for global superpowers. So by supporting India, the Soviet Union tried to show its presence to the world in the Cold War and post Cold-War era. India also felt comfortable with the Soviet friendship, as it was isolated in the subcontinent due to Sino-Pak axis. During the Cold War era there was a competition among superpowers to gain support of Third World countries and the Third World countries were very much interested to come closer with the superpower. The Soviet Union also took India as its gateway into the developing countries, as India was one of the leading countries among the Third World and a leading member Non-Aligned countries. The Indo-Soviet friendship had come a long innings and had become stronger with various treaties like the 1971 Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation. It was strengthened more and more by Delhi Declaration of 1986. India and the Soviet Union created a model of friendship among the countries of the world and moved forward for a long-term strategic and military co-operation. Their common perceptions of an increasingly inter-dependent world and efforts for universal peace and nuclear disarmament have brought the two countries still closer. The deeper and more meaningful contents of

relationship between these two countries have been forging ahead consistently for decades. Close cooperation between India and the USSR is further backed by the fact that their geopolitical compulsions, regional responsibilities and global interests in the present coincide more than ever before. These factors open up bright prospects for an all round development of the multifaceted relations between these two countries in the future.

There is solid basis for qualitative expansion of the fabric of bilateral relations in the present when leadership in India and the USSR has gone into the hands of younger generations committed to thorough-going changes in the socio-economic structure and political set-up of their respective countries. Thus the need to retain continuity with the past development of Indo-Soviet ties is intertwined with the introduction of changes into the body-politic of relations between these two countries. And it is worthy of note that both the Indian and the Soviet leaders have entrusted themselves with this onerous task. India's preference for the "adaptation of past perspectives to present realities" under Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi finds a befitting response in Soviet policy under Soviet President Gorbachev's stewardship not only for "preserving" "what was created by the preceding generations" in the field of Indo-Soviet relations but also "advancing and deepening them", reaching new forms of cooperation. Rajiv Gandhi and Mikhail Gorbachev have successfully laid down the basis for a more dynamic and innovative approach to bilateral, regional and international issues. Their warm personal bonds have also strengthened the traditional ties between the two countries. As the study reveals, relations between India and the Soviet Union are of autonomous character. While preserving their traditional ties and friendship with the other countries, both the sides have maintained a close rapport with each other.



## Chapter : III

### Strategic Dimensions of Indo-Russian Relations (1991-2008)

In January 1992, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Pravda correspondent in New Delhi said that both Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin had one thing in common; both of them were pro West. Russia was inclined towards the West during the initial period of its emergence. Since Indian leaders enamoured of Mikhail Gorbachev more than Boris Yeltsin, India had to pay a price for it. When Yeltsin came to power in Russia, he ignored India. Amidst all this confusion two different schools of thought existed in Russia with regard to its relations towards India. The first school, which was popular in the Foreign Ministry in Russia, asserted that special relations with India adversely affected Russia's relations with other countries of the South Asian region, including Pakistan. Therefore the epoch of special relations with India should be ended<sup>1</sup>. The second school felt that the traditional special relationship with India should be retained. India should be given priority in the South Asia, while, at the same time, good relationship should be developed with actors, including Pakistan<sup>2</sup>. The second approach prevailed in the academic and parliamentary circles in Russia. The post-Soviet Russian leadership was so preoccupied with domestic issues and Russia's relations with the United States and Europe that it did not give attention to relations with countries such as India. In January 1992, a high level Indian delegation did not succeed in meeting either President Boris Yeltsin or the Russian Foreign

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<sup>1</sup> See for details Jyotsna Bakshi, *Russia and India: From Ideology to Geopolitics 1947-1998*, (Dev Publication, Delhi, 1999), p.214.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Minister<sup>3</sup>. At the same time, there were wide ranging discussions both in the Russian Duma as well as in the governing board of Russian Foreign Ministry about Russia's policy towards India. The dominant view put forth by Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and his team was that there was no need to preserve in 'special relationship' with India which existed during the Soviet era<sup>4</sup>. Mr. Kozyrev and his associates suggested that a special relationship with India would undermine Russia's interactions with other South Asian countries, particularly Pakistan<sup>5</sup>. In the parliamentary hearings on relations with India, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgy Kunadze overtly articulated similar views. In 1991, the Foreign Minister of Russia, Mr. Andrei Kozyrev, ignored the Third World and refused to regard India as an ally<sup>6</sup>. In the early period of President Yeltsin's rule, the advocates of the first approach that was opposed to special relationship with India had an upper hand. For the first time in November 1991, Russia voted for a Pakistan sponsored resolution in the UN for the establishment of a nuclear free zone in South Asia to which India was opposed<sup>7</sup>.

However, a pro Indian stand existed among the Russian political elites and the academic community about Moscow's policy towards New Delhi. It warned that Russia's relations with a major country like India should not be reduced to the level of other countries of South Asia<sup>8</sup>. Many important members of the Russian Duma, such as Abratsumov and Pudovkin openly circulated the view that India was and should remain Russia's first priority<sup>9</sup>. An article published in the Pravda went on to argue that

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<sup>3</sup> For details see Sanjay Kumar Pandey, "Russia and India: Putting Back Relations on An Even Keel", in P.L. Dash & Andrei M. Nazarkin, eds., *Indo-Russian Diplomatic Relations: Sixty Years of Enduring Legacy*, (Academic Excellence Publisher & Distributors, Delhi, 2008), p.119.

<sup>4</sup> See for details Raj Kumar Kothari, "India on The Russian Foreign Policy Radar", Note 3, p.508.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> See for details Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 1.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p.215.

<sup>8</sup> See Raj Kumar Kothari, "India on The Russian Foreign Policy Radar", Note 3, p.510.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

India has “a great strategic potential” in global affairs and this will be felt more and more as the years pass by. It was therefore in the vital interest of Russia to preserve its closer relationship with India which was inherited from the Soviet Union period. Similar views were shared by well known Russian politicians like Zhirinovsky, Burbulis and Lukyanov, who were earlier chairmen of the Duma’s group on India<sup>10</sup>. In this context Saifuddin Soz, former member of Indian Parliament said, “the world is changing and changing very fast, but one thing remains continuous and timeless like a polar star, and that is Indo-Russian relations. The Soviet Union collapsed, but our friendship remained”<sup>11</sup>.

Yevgeny Chelysev, Russian academician and an expert on Indian affairs had acknowledged that India remains a great power and relations with her must be fully restored<sup>12</sup>. Finally, the Russian government came up with a foreign policy document in 1993 that resolved the policy differences with respect to Russia’s foreign economic policy with India by making the observation that economic and geographical considerations demand close ties with India<sup>13</sup>. It also stated that Russia’s policy must be formed with consideration of India’s significance as a country affirming itself as a regional power among the developing countries<sup>14</sup>.

It is noteworthy that the Russian Federation, under the leadership of President Yeltsin, picked the thread from where President Gorbachev had left. A.K. Damodaran, former Indian diplomat characterized the new Russian foreign policy as a ‘remarkable

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> See details Saifuddin Soz as quoted by Artem Rudnitsky, in “Russia and India: In Search of A New Strategy”, *World Affairs*, Vol.3, No. 2, April-June 1999, p.81.

<sup>12</sup> For details see Yevgeny Chelysev as quoted by Anand P. Mavalankar, in “The Changing Matrix of Indo-Russian Cooperation”, Note 3, p.495.

<sup>13</sup> See for details Anand P. Mavalankar, “The Changing Matrix of Indo-Russian Cooperation”, Note 3, p.495.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

example of both continuity and change, more continuity than change'<sup>15</sup>. Even during the last years of President Mikhail Gorbachev's period there were indications that the Soviet Union was re-appraising its policy towards India. President Gorbachev in the first formal summit with President Bush at Washington in June 1990, agreed to include Kashmir issue and Indo-Pak relations in the agenda bypassing the vocal opposition to the move by India<sup>16</sup>. Critical comments were made in the Soviet Press on India's reservation on Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its stand on the Kashmir issue. Official Soviet pronouncements on Soviet-Third World relations made it clear that the Soviet Union wanted to pursue merely a 'business like' policy in the Third World<sup>17</sup>. It was obvious that the Soviet Union under President Gorbachev was no more interested in issues and problems vital for developing countries including India, as it was enthusiastic to develop closer ties with the West for its smooth transition to democracy and market economy.

Dimitri Volsky noted that the Moscow-Delhi ties have lost their basis with the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union<sup>18</sup>. The gap in the mutual understanding between Russian and Indian leaders was one of the important factors that led to the worsening of relations. The response of the government of India to the August coup of 1991 was made in haste. Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's remarks that the overthrow of President Mikhail Gorbachev was an instinctive example of over enthusiastic reformers annoyed the pro-reformist leaders<sup>19</sup>. President Yeltsin himself was a self-proclaimed radical reformer. Indian policy-making showed

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<sup>15</sup> For details see A.K. Damodaran as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, in *India-Russia Partnership: Kashmir, Chechnya and Issues of Convergence*, (New Century Publications, New Delhi, 2006), p.29.

<sup>16</sup> See for details Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, in *India-Russia Partnership: Kashmir, Chechnya and Issues of Convergence*, (New Century Publications, New Delhi, 2006), p.29.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> See for details Dimitri Volsky as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 15, p. 36.

<sup>19</sup> See for details P.V. Narasimha Rao as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 15, p. 36.

its own weakness in dealing with the turbulent changes in the former Soviet Union. In the absence of new initiatives, the Indian bureaucracy clung to the tradition of putting faith in a single leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. The Indian policy makers were also deeply prejudiced against President Boris Yeltsin; much of this prejudice was gained through Western media. Because of such prejudices they were slow and reluctant in dealing with President Yeltsin's leadership<sup>20</sup>.

Even after the break up of the Soviet Union and Russia's inclination towards the West, India was still considered an important partner. Though the position of prominence that India enjoyed earlier was not a distinct feature, it figured among the important countries with whom Russia sought to forge closer cooperation in the possible areas of understanding. This was quite evident and rather emphasized during President Yeltsin's visit to India in January 1993. In fact, the restoration of friendly ties was based on the principle of mutual interest instead of ideology<sup>21</sup>. Moscow was beginning to realize that unless it formulates a consistent, coherent and conceptual policy in Asia and above all towards India, it cannot play a weighty role in world politics<sup>22</sup>. The attitude of Russia towards India during this period changed due to the following reasons. First, the Russian leadership realized the loopholes in its foreign policy, i.e., neglecting the old allies like India. Second, Western economic aid did not flow as per their expectations to revive Russian economy. Third, the Russian leadership realized that in order to relocate its strategic position in international affairs an independent approach rather than submission to the West was the need of the hour. Fourth, the ethnic, economic and emerging political structures in Russia found their

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<sup>20</sup> See details Note 16, p. 36.

<sup>21</sup> For details see Sita Gopalan Ramchandran, "India's Relations with Erstwhile Soviet Union and Russia", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. XVIII, No. 7, October, 1995, p.978.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p. 982.

similar components in India. Economic development, terrorism, emerging international power structure were some of the common concerns for both the countries. As a result, with the visit of the then President of Russia, Boris Yelstin to India in 1993, both the countries sought to revise the old relationship in a manner befitting the changed international scenario. Hence, when President Boris Yelstin declared Kashmir as an integral part of India, it was very much on expected lines<sup>23</sup>. Such a position reinforced continuity in Russia's Kashmir policy.

According to Anatoli Kutsenko, the Russo-Indian strategic partnership was born of the rich traditions of special relations, which existed between the two countries in the Soviet period. He explained that for Russia, the idea of strategic partnership with India based on the 'special' relationship, based on: (1) mutual trust, benefit and equality; and (2) broad accord of the public and political forces of both the countries. Their partnership is also expected to promote peace and to play a stabilizing role in international relations<sup>24</sup>. Partnership for Kozyrev meant full scale schemes seeking (1) "close and sincere progression in world affairs", (2) "mutual recognition as like minded nations", (3) "closing into institutional gap between Russia and the West"; (4) partnership to be rule based and characterized by "mutual trust", on important decisions; and (5) "mutual respect for each others interests and concerns<sup>25</sup>.

Indian External Affairs Minister Madhav Singh Solanki, during his visit to the Soviet Union in November 1991, held talks with important Russian leaders including

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<sup>23</sup> See for details Debidatta Aurobindo Mahapatra, "Russia's Policy Towards Kashmir Issue in the Changing World Order", *International Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1, January-March, 2004, pp. 129-130.

<sup>24</sup> For details see Anatoli Kutsenko as quoted by Mohd. Moazzam Ali, in "Russia's Foreign Policy And 'Strategic Partnership' Move Since 1991: Implications For India", in Shashikant Jha & Bhashwati Sarkar, eds., *Amidst Turbulence and Hope-Transition in Russia and Eastern Europe*, (Lancer's Books, New Delhi, 2002), p.241.

<sup>25</sup> See for details Kozyrev as quoted by Mohd. Moazzam Ali, Note 24, p.238.

President Yeltsin. This was the first direct contact between Indian government and the Russian leaders after the August coup. President Yeltsin, in a welcome address on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1991, stressed that this is the first visit in the history of Russian-Indian links and stated that the changed situation in USSR has made the present meeting 'historically necessary'<sup>26</sup>. He expressed his keenness to establish ties with India and accepted the Indian Prime Minister's invitation to pay an official visit to the country.

In January 1992, a delegation of Indian officials, led by Foreign Secretary J.N. Dixit, visited Moscow. The Indian officials could not meet Russian Foreign Minister Mr. Kozyrev, who cancelled his meeting with the Indian delegation. A Russian expert pointed out that on the Russian side the political will was lacking to take relations with India seriously<sup>27</sup>. The Indian delegation handed over a letter from the Prime Minister of India P.V. Narasimha Rao to Russian President Boris Yeltsin, which contained two elements, first, India accepted Russia as a successor state, subject to terms it worked out with other former Soviet Union Republics and second, invitation to President Yeltsin to visit India at his convenience. In September-October 1992, the outgoing ambassador of India in Moscow, Eric Gonsalves, expressed that Indo-Russian relations had reached a take off stage and the period of uncertainty was over. It seemed to him that the current state of Indo-Russian relations was more orderly than we had with the Soviet Union during the last two years<sup>28</sup>.

In October 1992, a summary of the long awaited foreign policy concept prepared by the Russian Foreign Minister was made public. Regarding India, it reflected two divergent approaches, but a certain ambiguity in Russia's stand on India continued. Russia did not want its policy to be 'deliberately pro-India'. Nor did it want

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<sup>26</sup> See for details President Yeltsin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobindo Mahapatra, Note 23, p.135.

<sup>27</sup> For details see Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 1.

<sup>28</sup> See for details Eric Gonsalves as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 1, pp.219-220.

its policy towards India to be artificially restrained in the name of striking an abstract balance and 'equidistance' between India and Pakistan. Russia wanted its policy towards India to be pragmatic and flexible<sup>29</sup>. In 1993, New Delhi and Moscow worked out to redefine their relationship according to the post Cold War realities. Russian President Yeltsin had postponed his visits to India twice. It was a sign of Russian reluctance to further develop relations with India. However, soon Russia realized its mistake as relationship with Pakistan was not lucrative on economic and geographic counts. Thus, while maintaining contacts with Islamabad, Moscow began exploring the possibilities of resuming the Indo-Russian strategic ties.

The initial years of President Yeltsin were marked by uncertainty, especially aggravated by transitional problems. During the year 1992, Russian foreign policy was blurred by the profound economic, social, political and ethnic crisis in the country. The changing perception in Russian foreign policy towards South Asia was evident during the first month of that year (1992). In an interview, the then head of the Asia-Pacific department of Russia's Foreign Minister, Alexander Losyukov, said "the present policy is aimed at developing cooperation with its former adversaries while preserving normal relations with the countries it called and calls its friend". He said, Moscow invariably supported India in its controversies with Pakistan, although such support quite often had a negative impact on our relationship with Islamabad<sup>30</sup>.

The Indo-Russian relations during President Yeltsin's period (1991-2000) can be classified into two phases. While the initial two years were difficult in shaping the bilateral relations, the later years saw gradual evolution of relations in a steady manner. As a result, the short-lived first phase had to enter the second phase wherein

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<sup>29</sup> For details see Ranjana Mishra, "Changing Contours of Indo-Russian Strategic Relations" Note 3, p.52.

<sup>30</sup> For details see Alexander Losyukov as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 23, p.134.

Russia started considering itself a 'Eurasian country' since more it lay in Asia than in Europe. Thus, Indo-Russian relations revived in the second phase. The two countries reoriented their relations keeping in view the changing realities in the changing world order.

President Boris Yeltsin's visit to India in January 1993 marked the beginning of a new phase in Indo-Russian relations. The visit ended all speculations regarding the deteriorating relations between the two countries, the process of which started with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Regarding the Kashmir issue, a clear shift was discerned with President Yeltsin's visit. That was a sharp contrast to Russia's perception of the issue just after the disintegration as we saw in Russian Vice President Rutskoi's visit to Pakistan in December 1991. In his speech at a meeting with the Indian businessmen, President Yeltsin made it clear that the Indo-Russian relations would be developed on the principle of mutually beneficial, friendly cooperation, good neighborliness and respectful attitude towards each other<sup>31</sup>. He further said, we do not like any 'axis', 'triangles' 'polygons' or any other blocs<sup>32</sup>. We do not want to participate in any bloc. We want to build our foreign relations, including those with India, on a bilateral basis, not directed against any third party<sup>33</sup>. President Yeltsin made this statement with regard to the then Indo-Soviet relations which, according to him, were 'against the world imperialism and so-called Chinese hegemonies'. On Indo-Russian strategic partnership, the President of Russia Yeltsin had said that, the basic interests of both Russia and India coincide. Both India and Russia are committed to democratic principles. Both the countries sincerely seek

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<sup>31</sup> See for details President Yeltsin as quoted by Krishan Gopal, "India and Russia: The Ambit of Strategic Partnership", Note 3, pp. 76-77.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p.77

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

positive trends in contemporary world not to be reversed. Both India and Russia are at the same time interested to strengthen each other's stability and territorial integrity. They have common problems, i.e., international terrorism, illegal arms and drug trafficking. President Yeltsin said, "from the point of view of geopolitics, morality and common sense, Russia and India stand close to each other, as they were never before. When I am told by people that the period of special relationship between India and Russia has come to a close, I reply to them by saying that we are now entering a new phase of relationship, a relationship without any political hypocrisy or double dealing, but a relationship of natural sincere friendship, cooperation and trust. Our two countries have never been engaged in any war, or in any territorial conflict with each other. Our people and our political leaders have gained enormous wealth of goodwill and experience of fair interaction. President Boris Yeltsin said, "we develop our relations with India, we follow the principle of both countries' commitment to democracy, which means also trust, openness and large scale cooperation, healthy pragmatism in politics and economics, removing ideology from politics, direct links between the people of the two countries, broad development of economic cooperation with private capital, at last, it means continuity of friendship between our peoples that we had in the past, that we have now and in future also. India must continue as a strategic partner of Russia, which was strongly in favour of bilateral equal relations between the two countries, confirming to the interest of each other. He also emphasized that Russia would like to develop its ties with India in a de-ideologed manner so as to minimize possibility of these directed against the third party".

The year 1993 is considered a very remarkable year as the two countries signed a new friendship treaty and also achieved a breakthrough in the settlement of the nagging debt problem. Izvestia, a daily news paper from Moscow, rightly informed its

readers on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 1993, that President Boris Yeltsin had resolved the debt problem and unfrozen relations with India. President Boris Yelstin declared that India must continue to be a ‘strategic partner of Russia’<sup>34</sup>. He emphasized that Russia would like to develop its ties with India in a de-ideologised fashion. Russia endorsed India’s stand on the Kashmir issue and assured that it would refrain from selling arms to Pakistan<sup>35</sup>.

President Yelstin made the Russian stand on the Kashmir issue clear by stating that, “we support the settlement in Kashmir according to the Indian version so as to maintain integrity and unity of India. We support it<sup>36</sup>. And in whatever international organization it may be, in the United Nations Security Council - we shall stand by this point of view”<sup>37</sup>. During his visit, the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation was signed between the two countries. The treaty, while discarding the special relationship theory, puts emphasis on bilateral relations and is reflective of the current situation in Moscow. The treaty of 1993 does not include the word ‘peace’. There is no provision for immediate consultations in the event of an aggression against one party for the removal of the threat. It was rather based on ‘a universal approach’, ‘non-discrimination’, overcoming ideological reality. According to President Yelstin, ‘the new treaty is more in line with the reality, with the interests of the Indian people and the people of Russia’<sup>38</sup>. President Yeltsin realized, with his visit, that India could be Russia’s ‘largest international asset’, nor US nor Western Europe<sup>39</sup>. President Yeltsin supported India on three crucial issues without mincing words. First, he supported India on the issue of Kashmir holding it to be an integral part of India. Second, he

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<sup>34</sup> See for details President Yeltsin as quoted by Raj Kumar Kothari, Note 4.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> For details see President Yeltsin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 23, p.136.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> See for details President Yeltsin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 15, p.52.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

assured to India about space cooperation and the supply of cryogenic engines despite the Western pressure. Third, on the issue of nuclear proliferation he understood the Indian position. He did not raise this issue during the course of his talks with the Indian leaders. The position of the Russian leadership on these issues was a clear indication that Russia had shed its Western orientation which failed to prove to be ‘panacea for all the ills of Russia’. President Yeltsin, as it appeared, could well gauge the emerging world order in which the interests of both the countries converged on many fronts. President Yelstin also promised to support India’s candidature for permanent membership in the UN Security Council<sup>40</sup>. President Yelstin made it categorical that Russia would not give military- technical aid to Pakistan, thereby scotching all the speculation regarding possible supply of Russian military equipment to Pakistan. At the same, time during a press conference in New Delhi, he said, we want some kind of relations with Pakistan and that we do not want a rupture in these relations over this problem (meaning Kashmir)<sup>41</sup>.

President Yelstin’s visit was significant from many points of view. It restored the tradition of contact at the highest political level. Former Indian President, Dr.S.D. Sharma, in a banquet speech, referring to Yeltsin’s visit, said, “your first visit to India is a reflection of continuity in the midst of change”<sup>42</sup>. Hannes Adomeit wrote that already “since the end of 1992, Russian foreign policy was absorbing and reflecting the growing impulses of assertive nationalism and disenchantment with the West. Yeltsin’s visit can be described as a fruitful exercise in diplomatic relations in

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<sup>40</sup> For details see President Yeltsin as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, in “Russian Policy Towards South Asia”, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. XXIII, No. 8, November, 1999, p.1379.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> See for details President Dr. S.D. Sharma as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 15, p.51.

restoring the special relationship, which both the countries enjoyed for more than four decades before the collapse of the Soviet Union”<sup>43</sup>.

President Yeltsin’s visit raised hopes for a new beginning in bilateral relations. ‘The President of Russia is going to India to lay the foundations of a new relationship,’ wrote Izvestia. Pravda expressed the hope that ‘New Delhi’s term has come and the visit would usher in a new era of cordial relationship. It referred Gennady Burbulis, the Russian Republics first Deputy Chairman, as stating that ‘India is the central plank of Russian foreign policy’. It also stated that “Delhi is perhaps a vital stop to determine the broad contours of President Yeltsin’s policy”<sup>44</sup>. The Hindustan Times editorial on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1993 titled ‘Yeltsin strikes a positive note’ maintained that by supporting India’s position that Kashmir is its integral part and pledging to stand by it in the United Nations Security Council, the Russian President has held out the hope of a Soviet-type counter to Pakistan’s renewed efforts to internationalize the issue.” President Yeltsin’s visit also removed the Indian anxiety about the Russian stand not only on issues like Kashmir but also other related issues like Pakistan-sponsored terrorism and Pakistan’s move to spread religious fundamentalism in the region. He also clarified that “Russia will not seek to improve relations with Pakistan at India’s cost”<sup>45</sup>. Against this backdrop it became clear that Russia was against terrorism intertwined with religious fundamentalism that had been a matter of grave concern for both India and Russia.

President Yelstin after returning to Moscow from India told the Press, “I am extremely satisfied with my visit to India. He signaled that his trip to New Delhi was another move towards balancing Russia’s foreign policy between East and West”. He

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<sup>43</sup> For details see Hannes Adomeit as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 15, p.51.

<sup>44</sup> See for details see Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.50.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, p. 53

emphasized that, "Since Russia is a Eurasian country, and we can not over look this fact". President Yeltsin was ready to confront the emerging realities and therefore, gave up the one-sided approach. This change in approach reflected in his policy statements during his visit to India<sup>46</sup>.

Russia came heavily on Pakistan for artificially politicizing the Kashmir issue and for using human rights slogans for 'non- human rights ends'. Oleg Malghinov, First Deputy Head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Department on International Humanitarian Cooperation and Human Rights, during his visit to India in the first week of June 1994, voiced his concern over this artificial politicization of the Kashmir issue by Pakistan. "Kashmir is not a human rights issue", he said, and it should be resolved by means of "direct talks between India and Pakistan on the basis of the Simla agreement"<sup>47</sup>. He emphasized that, "we are for India's integrity and we think that manipulating human rights slogans to give an additional argument by those who stand for its disintegration is a bad practice"<sup>48</sup>. He compared the Indian situation with Russia's problems emerging out of ethnic violence and separatism and said, "we have the same problems here in Russia". Chemyshev said Russia would welcome India's greater political and economic involvement in the region, suggesting that New Delhi could play a constructive role in resolving the civil conflict in Tajikistan<sup>49</sup>. He agreed with the suggestion that India could be included as an observer in the Tajik peace talks. Chemyshev also envisaged a possibility of Russia and India setting up joint ventures in the Central Asian Republics.

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<sup>46</sup> See for details President Yeltsin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p. 60

<sup>47</sup> For details see Oleg Malghinov as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p. 55.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> See for details Chemyshev as quoted by Sita Gopalan Ramchandran, Note 21, p.988.

Former Indian Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao's visit to Moscow from 29<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1994 further strengthened the bilateral relations. Both the countries were ready to adopt common positions on various issues. Two important declarations were signed in 1994 whereby Russia and India articulated their joint resolve to fight against the threat of extremism, terrorism and separatism. Prime Minister P.V Narasimha Rao said his visit to Moscow had helped in achieving a real breakthrough in bilateral relations between India and Russia which had sagged with the process of collapse of the Soviet Union. The Rao-Yeltsin summit signified the overcoming of the derailment in Russia-India ties experienced after the collapse of the Soviet state and sought to initiate a qualitatively new stage of constructive interaction on a broad range of bilateral, regional and international issues between the two countries, including a joint search for ways of resolving contemporary problems. Both the leaders took this opportunity not only to strengthen bilateral relations but also to infuse in them the warmth and sincerity of the age old Indo-Soviet ties. Indian Prime Minister Rao and Russian President Yeltsin signed two declarations on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1994. The first was the Moscow Declaration on protecting the interests of pluralistic states and the second was a declaration on further development and deepening of cooperation. President Yeltsin noted that the signing of these declarations and other documents would facilitate the restoration of close political, cultural and scientific relations which both the countries had enjoyed before the disintegration of Soviet Union<sup>50</sup>. Following his one to one talk with the Indian Prime Minister, TAR-TASS (official news agency of Russia) quoted President Yelstin as saying, “there are no differences at all”, and “we work very harmoniously and in a coordinated manner and

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<sup>50</sup> See for details President Yeltsin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.61.

we understand each other well”<sup>51</sup>. This statement of President Yeltsin was an indication that both India and Russia had come out from the brief period of uncertainty in the aftermath of the disintegration, and both the leaders were all set to build relations afresh, keeping in mind the emerging realities. On Kashmir, Moscow has been maintaining a studied silence though the Moscow Declaration notes that Russia and India are among the largest multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious states and as such they recognize their responsibility to oppose the threats to democracy and peace. From now on, it was clearly going to be a business relationship among both the countries pursuing their political agendas independently. However, Russia indicated its backing for the Indian stand on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir<sup>52</sup>.

The Moscow Declaration of 1994 carried the provision of non-participation in any alliance directed against the other side. The declaration proclaimed the “establishment of relations of strategic partnership between the two countries based on mutual understanding and long-term confidence in each other”. It also envisaged the “elevation of their multifaceted ties to an even higher and qualitatively new level” while imparting them a “specially close and dynamic character both in the bilateral field and in the international arena”. The preamble to the declaration referred to the conviction that “it is necessary to build a multipolar global structure based on sovereign equality of all states and peoples”. It also took note of the “desire to jointly contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security as well as to the promotion of the establishment of a new, just and stable world order” in conformity with the “purpose and principles of the UN charter”. It was declared that the “strategic partnership between the two sides is not directed against any other state or group of

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid

<sup>52</sup> See for details Sita Gopalan Ramchandran, Note 21.

states and does not need to create a military political alliance”. The declaration drew attention not only to the nature of the challenges faced by the two countries, but also focused attention on the source from which this threat emanated for both. It also reiterated support of the signatories for each other's territorial integrity. Indian Prime Minister Rao described the Moscow Declaration as “epoch making” as it concentrated on the main problems the world was facing in the post bloc situation, such as religious extremism, political extremism and terrorism<sup>53</sup>. Though the Kashmir issue was not mentioned in the declaration, it was implied that both the countries were opposed to nefarious designing being carried out by separatist forces to disturb the unity and territorial integrity of India. According to Shipping Tang (Chinese author), Chinese point out with resentment that even as political factions within Russia debated whether China was friend or foe, none seemed to doubt that India is Russia's friend<sup>54</sup>.

This was evident during the visit of K. Srinivasan, the then India's Foreign Secretary to Moscow in August 1994. His visit was important in view of Pakistan's effort to internationalize the Kashmir issue in the forthcoming 49th session of the United Nations General Assembly. During discussions, the Russian leaders expressed support to the 14 Indian version of the Kashmir issue, i.e., it is a bilateral issue and it should be resolved bilaterally according to the provisions of the Simla agreement<sup>55</sup>.

An agreement was signed to establish hotline between Moscow and New Delhi during Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to India from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> December 1994. The highlight of the visit was the agreement on long term military and technical cooperation till the year 2000. The then Russian Prime Minister

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<sup>53</sup> See for details P.V. Narasimha Rao as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 23, p.137.

<sup>54</sup> For details see Shipping Tang as quoted by K.R. Singh, in “New Parameters of Strategic Partnership” in V. D. Chopra, ed., *Global Significance of Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership*, (Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2005), p.67

<sup>55</sup> See Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.54

dispelled the Indian apprehension of Moscow's arms supply to Pakistan. He made it clear to the Press that we have an agreement with the Indian leadership whereby our relations with Pakistan are fully transparent and open. We are not supplying any weapons to Pakistan today and we have no intention of doing that in the future<sup>56</sup>.

Indian Minister of External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee's visit to Moscow from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> August 1995 was timely and significant in view of the increasing tension between India and Pakistan due to the proxy war that the latter pursued vigorously, and its efforts to isolate India diplomatically at the international fora. Such efforts were also being made in Russia, which had traditionally been more favourable towards India. Pakistan was keen to see that Russia changes its stand on Kashmir, that it applies the same principles and standards with regard to sale of conventional arms to both the countries. In short, Pakistan was anxious to neutralize the special relationship between India and Russia. However, the visit of Pranab Mukherjee further strengthened the bilateral relations and prompted his Russian counterpart, Andrei Kozyrev to dispel all Indian fears. Kozyrev was reported to have said that "Russia considers Kashmir as an integral part of India and that this issue be resolved on the basis of the Simla agreement"<sup>57</sup>. The resolve of India and Russia to fight the menace of terrorism was again reiterated during Mukherjee's meeting with the Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

During Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin's visit in 1995, Russian officials enthusiastically talked of "Russia India partnership" and referred to India as their best

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<sup>56</sup> For details see Viktor Chernomyrdin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.63

<sup>57</sup> See for details Andrei Kozyrev as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.63.

partner in the region<sup>58</sup>. Russian Foreign Minister Primakov spoke of India as a ‘global power’ and a ‘priority partner’ of Russia<sup>59</sup>.

Russian Foreign Minister Primakov’s visit to India from 29-31<sup>st</sup> March 1996 had a special significance in re-emerging Indo-Russian ties. During the visit both sides focused on peace, stability, cooperation and avoidance of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the regions of Central and Southwest Asia. His discussion with the Indian leaders manifested a greater understanding on both sides about parallelism in their respective national interests and their similar concerns. The discussions focused on the two countries being plural societies with a multi-ethnic polity, and the similarity of predicament that India and Russia were facing in Kashmir and Chechnya respectively<sup>60</sup>. Primakov reportedly expressed the view that “the territorial integrity of Russia and India are of primary interest to us”<sup>61</sup>. Primakov and his high level Indian interlocutors agreed that terrorism in all forms whether religious extremism or separatism poses a threat not only to multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual states but also poses a direct threat to international security and stability. Primakov during the visit spoke of India as a global power and a priority partner of Russia<sup>62</sup>. It was stressed that both the countries were united in the common struggle against terrorism, including narco-terrorism and in opposing certain dangerous international trends of discrimination against some countries. Primakov found a sympathetic response in New Delhi regarding his opposition to proposed eastward expansion of NATO. He added that Russia regarded India its strategic partner and could not

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<sup>58</sup> See for details Ranjana Mishra, “Changing Contours of Indo-Russian Strategic Relations”, Note 3, p.54

<sup>59</sup> For details see Primakov as quoted by Ranjana Mishra, Note 3, p. 54.

<sup>60</sup> See details Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.65.

<sup>61</sup> For details see Primakov as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.65.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid

contemplate any arms supply to Pakistan. He said, “Russia does not want Pakistan to emerge as counter weight to India”<sup>63</sup>.

In March 1997, the Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda visited Moscow. During his visit, India and Russia expressed their opposition to the fundamentalist and extremist forces. The two sides jointly called upon countries to resist from interfering in the internal affairs of other countries in the Asian region<sup>64</sup>. President Yeltsin and the then India's Defence Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav, during a meeting in October 1997 reaffirmed their countries intentions to develop a strategic partnership maintaining that military technical cooperation was the backbone of their bilateral discussions.

Yevgenyi Primakov, the Prime Minister of Russia was particularly keen to strengthen Russia's relations with old-allies like India. In December 1998 he paid a visit to India. He said, both Russia and India are facing terrorism from the Jehadi groups but they have yet to develop a strategic consensus to face this common danger<sup>65</sup>. He maintained that a new initiative should be taken by India to forge a relationship with Russia that can help in maintaining the regional balance both in South and Central Asia. He pointed out that the Central Asian region is under attack by the Jehadi movement that is presently anchored in Pakistan-Afghan border areas and it will be in the interest of both Russia and India to follow a common policy to thwart its attempts to overthrow the moderate regimes of Central Asia. In a way Central Asia is a key area where the thrust of the Jehadi movement can be confronted and contained. He suggested that long term strategic ties between Russia and India

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> See The Hindustan Times, 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1996.

<sup>65</sup> See for details Primakov as quoted by Afsir Karim, in “Indo-Russian Equation: A Rapid View” in V.D.Chopra, ed., *New Trends in Indo- Russian Relations* (Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2003), p.86.

will be in the interest of both the countries and they can forge closer ties on the following lines:

1. A formal agreement for close cooperation in countering Jehadi movement and terrorism is necessary under the present environment as both the countries face a long term threat from a common source. Joint training by the special forces of the two countries and combined intelligence operations will help both the countries and put the terrorists and the Jehadi groups on the defensive. Joint operations for cutting off sources of finances and arms supplies to terrorists if carried out successfully will hamper terrorist operations greatly.

2. A mutual security arrangement to curb low intensity conflicts in both countries, and preparation of joint doctrines to combat separatist movements sponsored by external agencies such as Islamic jihad. Sharing of intelligence to uncover the insurgent's plans and movements.

3. Tie up on research on weapons and armaments and exchange of information on new weapons systems and technologies. This should be managed by norms and principles laid down by the joint working groups for achieving quicker results and making joint efforts to counter the spread of Islamic fundamentalism by coordinating programmes and policies on issues of common interest related to the Central Asian region.

4. Central Asia has emerged with new national identities and aspirations. They collectively form a key area of great international significance because of economic potential and rich oil resources that rival the Middle East. During the past decade this region has been the target of direct and indirect attacks by the Islamic fundamentalist regime based in Afghanistan. India has yet to make a serious effort to build appropriate economic and strategic ties with the countries of this important region. Russia remains the most important player in this region despite the efforts of the US

and its allies to establish themselves here, India should develop a cooperative programme with Russia to gain influence in this area.

5. The propagation of the concept of a multi-polar world is shared by Russia and India, and as such a strategic partnership between the two countries will be necessary for evolving this concept.

The expansion of NATO and the latest American strategy of pre-emptive military action against those countries that do not share the American worldview have lent urgency to an integrated approach to counter hegemonic policies of the US administration. He concluded by saying that Russia-India relations have stood the test of time and should grow further in the current global environment. The issues that have brought the countries close in the past are strategically vital for both the countries. In the foreseeable future the issues of common interest such as USA's hegemonic designs, international terrorism and sponsored Jehadi terrorist movements will continue to be of vital concern for both Russia and India. A long-term strategic partnership between the countries is necessary to counter these forces.

Primakov declared that India was a "strong and appropriate candidate to occupy a seat in a reformed UN Security Council"<sup>66</sup>. Both, India and Russia, view the US bombardment of Iraq in 1998 as an attempt to undermine multilateralism, so as to discourage the emergence of genuine multipolar world. Both are also committed to the dispersal of power and influence across the globe and both envisage a powerful role for a reformed United Nations (UN) in the international system. During Primakov's visit both sides stated their final intention 'to proceed from the necessity of establishing a global multipolar system based on the equality of all sovereign states, democratic values and justice'. They announced their commitment to establish a new,

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<sup>66</sup> See Note 61, p.156.

stable and fair international order, to strengthen the role of the UN and its institutions and to jointly work for international peace and security<sup>67</sup>. A convergence of interests was also declared on such issues as international terrorism, illegal narcotics trade, situation in Afghanistan and around it. Both India and Russia have the same goal of establishing democratic order. Both are resolved to further reinforce the fundamentals of democracy, to impart maximum transparency to their respective social, economic and political system. In order to strengthen the democratic process in Russia they signed an agreement in 1998 on establishing an Indo-Russian Inter Parliamentary Commission co-chaired by the Speaker of Lok Sabha (India) and the Chairman of the State Duma (Russia)<sup>68</sup>.

Russia took an unequivocal stand that the Kargil conflict was caused by the “penetration of armed groups from Pakistan into the territory of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir”. A Press release by the Russian Foreign Ministry on June 17<sup>th</sup> 1999, made an “earnest appeal” to Islamabad to “refrain from violations” of the Pakistan-India accords on “the location of the agreed line of control which separates India from Pakistan in the Kashmir region”<sup>69</sup>. Both the countries strongly criticized American bombing of Iraq and demanded that the conflict be resolved under the auspices of the UN. As the Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov declared at a press-conference on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1999, “any attempts to bypass the UN Security Council would lead to the undermining of the existing mechanism and international relations would be plunged into chaos”<sup>70</sup>. India welcomed Russia's leading role in the Commonwealth of Independent States, while Russia accepted India as a central power

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<sup>67</sup> See for details Artem Rudnitsky, Note 11, p.87.

<sup>68</sup> See for details Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.162.

<sup>69</sup> For details see Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 40, p.1388.

<sup>70</sup> See for details Igor Ivanov as quoted by Artem Rudnitsky, Note 11, p.88.

in South Asia. On the whole, the geopolitical interests of the two countries coincided with regard to the entire Asian region, including the region that separated their borders. Russia and India are seriously concerned about the future of the rich oil and gas resources of the newly born Central Asian states. Stability in the region is under threat, and Russia fears that the spread of Islamic fundamentalism could threaten its southern flank. India is interested in preserving Russian influence in Central Asia; otherwise it fears the political vacuum might be filled by Pakistan and other Islamic states. Both Moscow and New Delhi are particularly concerned about Pakistan's aid to the Taliban movement in Afghanistan. The perceptions of Russia and India are also close regarding China insofar as they agree that China could be one of their most important political and economic partners, albeit with certain reservations that stem from unresolved disputes, mutual mistrust, suspicions, and apprehensions regarding Chinese expansionist behavior in the future<sup>71</sup>.

At the bilateral level, the official visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to India in October 2000 has opened up a new chapter in the history of Indo-Russian relations. Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia defined strategy as a term loaded with meaning. He said, "Strategic does not mean creating some kind of military alliance or bloc. When we say strategic, we mean long term, a partnership in keeping with the pragmatic national interest of our two countries, especially in this time of globalization and increasing competition of the world scene. One is not talking of military competition, but economic, scientific and technological competition. He elaborated that geographically Russia lies both in Europe and Asia. So, it is only natural that we should have our interests in the region. It is in our interests that this part of the world be stable and prosperous. That is very clear; our cooperation with

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<sup>71</sup> See for details Artem Rudnitsky, Note 11, p.88.

India is not directed against any third countries. It is in our interests to have a strong, developed and independent India, an India that would be a major player on the world scene. We see this as one of the balancing factors in the world, and we do all we can to ensure this does not change. This is where the strategic sense of partnership lies<sup>72</sup>. During the visit, the Declaration of Strategic Partnership; along with 16 other vital agreements in various fields were signed. Both the countries realized the importance of mutual cooperation in reshaping their policies in the new world order and were keen to arrive at some kind of strategic consensus for mutual benefit. The declaration of strategic cooperation proposed close economic, political, cultural and scientific collaboration. The two countries pledged to share information and hold joint consultations to combat international terrorism. India and Russia agreed on the desirability of a multi-polar world order based on equality of sovereign nations. Both countries can speak with confidence about commonality of geopolitical interests of their states. Our countries can easily find common grounds at any global and regional level on many contemporary problems. They have similar or near identical position on issues such as the settlement of the Middle East crisis, Iranian problem, situation in Central Asia, Afghanistan and other issues. The two sides decided to establish a Joint Working Group on Afghanistan.

The strategic partnership has become a weighty contribution of our countries to today's diplomacy making a strong case for equal and mutually beneficial cooperation. The then Indian Prime Minister A.B.Vajpayee highly praised Indo-Russian ties as a "shining example of relations between the two friendly countries to

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<sup>72</sup> For details see Vladimir Putin as quoted by Mohd. Moazzam Ali, Note 24, pp. 239-240.

be followed everywhere if world peace is to be achieved”<sup>73</sup>. He maintained that “our ties have not lost their historical mileage and have not shrunk to realpolitik pragmatism. Together we advocate the ideals of equality and non-violence, supremacy of international law, amidst the central role of the United Nations. We will jointly fight on the anti-terror front and react to world crisis, searching for ways of responding to new challenges and threats, and closely cooperate in the United Nations and other international organizations”.

Russia and India are active and constructive participants in the process of construction of a just world order, based on the principles of supremacy of law, sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of countries. They act as partners and allies, making a major contribution to achieve their common aim of formation of a multi-polar world. It can allow the world to become more democratic and stable. Long before the world began taking terrorism seriously; Russia and India have been fighting it. After the terrorist attack on New York and Washington in 2001, Moscow and New Delhi immediately activated the existing machinery for consultations like consultation at the level of Chiefs of Security Council set up in May 2000.

The year 2000 can rightly be labeled as a watershed in the Russia-India bilateral relations. It was during the first visit of the President of Russia Vladimir Putin to India that the two sides agreed to establish the practice of holding annual meeting at summits level<sup>74</sup>. This decision gave a qualitative new impetus to interactions between the two countries. From that year onwards the time tested bilateral cooperation

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<sup>73</sup> See for details A.B.Vajpayee as quoted by Alexander M. Kadakin, “Indo-Russian Relations: Problems and Prospects”, in Mahavir Singh & Victor Krassilchtchikov, eds., *Eurasian Vision*, (Felicitation Vol. on the 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Prof. Devendra Kaushik),(Anamika Publishers & Distributors (p) Ltd., New Delhi,2003), p.109

<sup>74</sup> See for details “From the History of Russian-Indian Relations”, *New Spring*, (Special Edition dedicated to the official visit of H.E President Vladimir V. Putin in January 2007) January 2007, P.9.

between the two countries was destined to culminate into a full fledged strategic partnership.

India and Russia have an established practice of consultation and cooperation at the bilateral and international level in the fight against international terrorism. We have underlined the importance of establishing a sound legal basis for cooperation in combating international terrorism, through the early adoption in the UN of the Comprehensive Convention in International Terrorism and the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism proposed by Russia. Effective dialogue on counter terrorism was conducted through a Joint Working Group established in October 2000 between the two Foreign Ministries. Both the countries established the 'Eminent Persons Group' during President Putin's visit to India in October 2000, with the objective of 'rendering assistance' and 'preparing recommendations' to strengthen bilateral relations, and cooperate on regional and international issues'. Also both sides have institutionalized interaction between the National Security Council of India (NSCI) and Security Council of the Russian Federation (SCRF) on a regular basis through a protocol signed in April 2000. Two Working Groups have been established under the aegis of the NSCI and SCRF. One on Regional Security; and, the other on International Terrorism. President Putin, speaking before the members of the Indian parliament on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2000, stated, "This issue (the Kashmir issue) can be resolved on a bilateral basis, on the basis of a compromise and on an unconditional respect for the line of control. Any foreign interference should be stopped"<sup>75</sup>.

President Putin hailed the strategic partnership document signed between the two countries in October 2000 as a 'practical document', because 'it was very

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<sup>75</sup> See for details President Putin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.97.

important one for the two countries towards building a multipolar world order'<sup>76</sup>. President Putin continued the policy of supporting India's claim to be a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), as it would promote the spirit of multipolarism<sup>77</sup>. In the joint statement issued at the end of President Putin's visit to India in October 2000, the two sides underlined the importance of joint efforts in 'combating international terrorism'. Both believed that the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan had become a 'breeding ground' for sponsoring and promoting 'extremism' in Chechnya and Indian-held Kashmir. Both agreed to set up a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Afghanistan. From the Indian point of view it could be considered a gain in that during President Putin's address to the joint session of the Indian Parliament during the same visit he said, that the same extremist organizations that were creating problems in Jammu & Kashmir were behind the troubles in Chechnya and other Northern territories of Russia<sup>78</sup>. The then Indian President, Dr Abdul Kalam was equally warm in his response to President Putin's speech. The President noted that the Russian leader in his last visit (in 2000) had referred to the "arc of instability" stretching from the Caucasus to Southeast Asia. "The epicenter of this arc is of course, in our common neighborhood" the Indian President said<sup>79</sup>. The world should realize that India too had stake in helping to create an international environment in which our mutually shared interests and aspirations can be advanced". The President stressed that with Russia "we have a shared vision" of a multi-polar

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<sup>76</sup> For details see President Putin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, "Russia's Foreign Policy Under Vladimir Putin", *Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol.13, Issue 1, January-March, 2006, p.47.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid

<sup>78</sup> See for details President Putin as quoted by Syed Adnan Ali Shah, "Indo-Russian Relations: Prospects in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", *Strategic Studies*, Winter, 2003, p.4.

<sup>79</sup> For details see Dr. Abdul Kalam as quoted by V.D. Chopra, Note 65, p.297.

world built on consensus and accommodation of different views and interests<sup>80</sup>. Dr. Kalam welcomed the joint statement (issued earlier in the day by President Putin and Prime Minister Vajpayee) which also stressed the need for international peace, security and stability with determined action for total elimination of international terrorism and religious extremism. He warned that the struggle against terrorism would not succeed if it was not conducted in an integrated manner on a global plain.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's Moscow visit in 2001 further strengthened the bilateral ties between the two countries. The two countries signed the "Moscow Declaration on International Terrorism", which condemns the double standard approach towards acts of terrorism. They condemned all forms of terrorism, 'based on any ground political, religious or ideological' and recommended countermeasures against those states, entities and individuals who support, fund or provide them shelter or asylum. Both sides also affirmed that 'bilateral cooperation in counter terrorism is an important aspect of their strategic partnership'. India and Russia also agreed to 'cooperate to implement the United Nation's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy', 'to ensure an early implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Global Terrorism' and to reach an agreement on the Draft Comprehensive Convention against international terrorism as submitted by India. Both sides confirmed their commitments to promote the formation of an equitable multipolar world order based on the principle of rule of law and equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in domestic affairs of states.

In the post Taliban Afghanistan, both countries are cooperating to gain maximum advantage from the evolving situation in the war torn country, and aimed at

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<sup>80</sup> See for details Dr. Abdul Kalam as quoted by V.P. Dutt, "Putin's Russia and India: Over view", Note 65, p.24.

excluding Pakistan from any future say in the Afghan affairs. During Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to Russia in November 2001, the Russian President Vladimir Putin, said in a press conference that India would be more actively involved in the 6+2 mechanism earlier evolved in the mid-1990s to bring peace to Afghanistan that comprises Pakistan, Iran, China, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Russia and the US<sup>81</sup>. Both countries also ruled out any future role for the remnants of Taliban in any future Afghanistan government. In the joint statement issued at the end of summit level talks between the two leaders in Moscow in November 2001, both sides expressed deep concern 'over the threat to the security and stability in Central Asia posed by international terrorism and religious extremism'. Both sides agreed that 'regional cooperation can play an important role in the stabilization of the situation in the Central Asian region'<sup>82</sup>. The joint statement was an updated declaration on "strategic partnership". They strongly condemned international terrorism and pledged to step up India-Russia cooperation in all fields, including military, in order to combat terrorism. They again warned against a policy of double standards that could result in a split in the common international position on terrorism. The joint statement noted that Russia supported India "as a strong and appropriate candidate for permanent membership in an expanded UN Security Council".

Strengthening the international legal basis of the counter terrorism effort is also a very important requirement. Apart from bilateral consultation and action on this issue, India and Russia are actively cooperating with the UN and other multilateral agencies for this purpose. The present focus is on adoption of two key treaties i.e., the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism proposed by India and the

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<sup>81</sup> See for details Vladimir Putin as quoted by Syed Adnan Ali Shah, Note 78, p.6.

<sup>82</sup> See for details Syed Adnan Ali Shah, Note 78, p.6.

Convention on Suppression of acts of Nuclear Terrorism, proposed by Russia. In this connection they called for an early completion of negotiations under the U.N. Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and the Convention for the suppression of acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which would enable nations to combat the global menace of terrorism more effectively. Both the countries have welcomed the Security Council Resolution 1373 of September 28, 2001 and the establishment of a Counter Terrorism Committee focusing on monitoring of implementation by states of their international obligations in the struggle against terrorism primarily with the view to reliably curtail any type of support moral, material, arms supplies, through propaganda, shelter etc.

India and Russia have also found a common ground on the vital subject of security. Both have agreed on the importance of maintaining global strategic stability and in this context, India supports all nuclear disarmament measures which would rectify the irrationalities of the Cold War. Both countries are committed to non-proliferation. Both the countries are concerned about establishing rational and realistic instrumentalities. In this regard, as a responsible country, India firmly believes that there is a need to seriously address true proliferation concerns. India is committed to working with the international community, including Russia, for this purpose. There is also a need to reckon with the emergence of non-conventional military threats as a dominant element in the overall security picture. This places a special burden on territorially large pluralistic states such as India and Russia. These are essential elements of a sensible, cooperative security order, which must also take into account the specific security needs of countries, especially large ones dictated by their specific security environment.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India in December 2002 opens up a new era of friendship and cooperation between India and Russia. This visit can be evaluated at two levels. At bilateral level this could be seen as a step towards reinforcing the overall India-Russia relations, providing it more substance and long term sustainability to the existing strategic partnership between the two nations. And at multilateral level, this could be seen as an achievement in addressing the problem of terrorism and evolving the mechanism in combating it, and also cooperating in energy sector, not only in Russia but in the Caspian region as well. Issues of terrorism, cooperation in defence sector, atomic energy and space technology, cooperation in energy sector, commitment for strengthening non-proliferation and disarmament goals, strengthening of UN's central role in promoting international security in a multi polar world, issue of Iraq and situation in Afghanistan and Central Asia were the major highlights of the meeting between the two heads of states. During this meeting both the leaders agreed to intensify and widen their cooperation at multilateral foras. Russian President Putin and Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee signed "The Delhi Declaration on further Consolidation of Strategic Partnership" between India and the Russian Federation and seven other agreements on economic, technical and scientific cooperation. Delhi Declaration aims at elevating the strategic partnership to an even higher and qualitative new level in both bilateral and multilateral relations. The declaration clearly states that "bilateral cooperation as well as cooperation with other countries would be further enhanced to meet the various challenges of globalization, in particular the mitigation of its negative manifestations".

Both the countries reiterated their commitment towards strengthening non proliferation and disarmament goals. In this respect the Delhi Declaration very clearly pointed out that "India and Russia are convinced that the promotion of the

disarmament process, including reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, is one of the most important components of security both in Asia and in the world at large<sup>83</sup>. Both the countries called for an early start of multilateral talks aimed at a comprehensive arrangement on non deployment of weapons in outer space, non use or threats of use of force in respect of space based objects and preserving the use of space for full range of cooperative, peaceful and developmental activities. With regard to fight-against terrorism, India and Russia emphasized the need to give substance and credibility to the global fight against terrorism and avoid selective approaches and political expediency. Both sides reaffirm that proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their materials, particularly the risk of their falling into the hands of terrorists constitutes a major threat to international peace and security. They highlighted the need to prevent terrorists or those who harbor them from acquiring or developing WMD, their means of delivery and related materials. While calling for a central role for the United Nations in such efforts, India and Russia said they would cooperate bilaterally as well as through appropriate multilateral channels towards this objective. The declaration said the two sides express their concern over continuing violence in Iraq and stressed the need for an intra Iraqi dialogue aimed at building national consensus on a new constitution and on restoring stability and security in the country. Both the sides advocate strict compliance of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546, particularly with regard to the interim timetable of political process stipulated by it with a view to facilitating the formation of a new democratic Iraq. The sides affirm their continuing interest in contributing to the reconstruction efforts in Iraq and urged a wider degree of international consultation in the ongoing

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<sup>83</sup> See for details Meena Singh Roy, "Commonalities of Indian and Russian Interests in Central Asia", Note 65, p.216.

peace efforts. Russia and India are united in their vision of the future pluralistic and democratic world order free from nuclear weapons, war or threat of war. They have a common perception of the principles of the supremacy of international law, equality and respect to legitimate interests of all members of the international community, which is necessary to establish a global system to counter new challenges including strengthening the international legal base for the fight against terror and religious extremism.

As tension increased along the Indo-Pak border in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2001, the Russian Foreign Ministry came with a timely warning for Pakistan to stop cross-border terrorism<sup>84</sup>. The Foreign Ministry expressed deep concern over the tension, “the main reason for which is the unending antinational activities of the extremists groups, based on the territory under Pakistani control”. The Russian position was further reinforced in the joint statement on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2002, in which both the countries gave the call for a comprehensive, long term, multi dimensional cooperation among the members of the international community to fight against the existing ties between Al Qaeda and Taliban with terrorist organizations active in other parts of the world, including Chechnya, the Central Asian Republic and the Indian state of Jammu Kashmir<sup>85</sup>. In this joint statement, the Russian side reiterated its strong condemnation of continued acts of cross border terrorism against India, including the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2001. Russia expressed its understanding and support regarding India’s justified demands that these activities from Pakistan and territory controlled by it cease of completely. Both the countries expressed the view that the

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<sup>84</sup> See for details Debidatta Aurobindo Mahapatra, Note 23, p.140.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, p.141

Pakistan President Musharraf's commitment to fight against terrorism in his 12<sup>th</sup> January 2002 speech must be judged on a rational ground. During a joint Press interaction, President Putin supported the Indian position that for the resolution of the Kashmir issue, India and Pakistan should adhere to the principles of Simla Agreement and Lahore Declaration<sup>86</sup>. This position of Russia is in consonance with the position of India to peacefully resolve the issue bilaterally. President Putin pointedly emphasized that "in the environment of complex international situation our constant dialogue is of special importance"<sup>87</sup>. Obviously, the frequent visits of the leaders of the two countries are intended to strengthen the process, of constant dialogue on bilateral as well as multilateral issues of regional and global importance.

The commonness in respective perceptions as well as interdependence of both countries to pursue their respective interests in general, both at bilateral and global levels is essentially the solid strength of the relationship. In their joint declarations there has been a constant reference to the on going problems emanating from their common neighborhood i.e., Afghanistan and Central Asian region, which impact massively on the security of both the countries. Notably, India and Russia came together to support the United Front for the Liberation of Afghanistan or the Northern Alliance. Russia lent military support and India provided non-military technical assistance since 1995 and their efforts crystallized in the forming of the bilateral Joint Working Group on Afghanistan in 2000.

On other international issues, like tensions in the Middle East and the Gulf both the countries held a common position. Regarding the US military strike on Iraq in 2003, they opposed any unilateral action against Iraq. During President Putin's visit

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<sup>86</sup> See for details Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.97.

<sup>87</sup> For details see President Putin as quoted by Krishan Gopal, in "India and Russia: The Ambit of Strategic Partnership", Note 3, p.87

both the countries, in their joint statement strongly opposed ‘unilateral use or threat of use of force in violation of the UN charter’ and stressed that a comprehensive settlement of the situation in Iraq is possible only through political and diplomatic efforts in strict conformity with the rules of international law and only under the aegis of the United Nations. Both the countries have expressed the view that the vexed Iran nuclear issue should be discussed within the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

On the Kashmir issue, President Putin expressed the Russian position that it strictly and continuously supports the normalization and improvement of India and Pakistan relations. He agreed with the Indian leadership with regard to the importance of Islamabad implementing its obligations and promise to prevent the infiltration of terrorists across the line of control into the state of Kashmir and at other points across the border, as well as to eliminate the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-controlled territory. This was a necessary prerequisite President Putin added, for the renewal of the peaceful dialogue between the two countries to resolve all outstanding issues in a bilateral framework as envisaged in Simla Agreement of 1972 and the Lahore Declaration of 1999”.

Further, the then Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee’s initiative to normalize relations with Pakistan found its strong support during Russian President Putin’s administration. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov called up his Indian counterpart Yashwant Sinha, on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2003 and expressed his government’s support for all the steps taken by India to achieve political stability in the region. President Putin had always been interested in peace in the region but not at the cost of India’s interests. In the pursuit of this policy objective, Russia opposed Pakistan’s reported move to take up the Kashmir issue in the United Nations Security Council. Russian Deputy Foreign

Minister Yuri F. Fedotov, during his visit to New Delhi on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2003 maintained that “this issue is not on the agenda of the world body”, and the “central problem was not Kashmir but that of terrorism and training camps operating in Pakistan”<sup>88</sup>. The statement issued by the Russian Foreign Ministry on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2003, after talks between Sinha and Ivanov in Moscow, reaffirmed the Russian stand that, “the full implementation of obligations assumed by Islamabad to stop infiltration of terrorists across the line of control into Jammu and Kashmir and the destruction of all terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan controlled territory would foster the spirit of cooperation in South Asia”<sup>89</sup>.

Both the countries have adopted almost the same position whether it is the US attack on Iraq, West Asia peace process, the issue of terrorism, or the restructuring of the United Nations (UN). On the issue of Iraq, President Putin, during his speech at the 58th session of General Assembly of UN on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2003, said, “Russia's position is consistent and crystal clear; it is only through the United Nations direct involvement in the reconstruction of Iraq that its people will get an opportunity to decide their own future”. He firmly believed that “United Nations should preserve its leadership in international affairs”. Regarding Israel-Palestine conflict, Russia along with India called for the prevention of the failure of the road map to settle the problem. Both agreed that any failure of the road map, backed by the quarter of Russia, the US, the UN and the EU, might result in the situation in Israel and Palestine as also the entire West Asia, spiraling beyond control. Further, Russia has reiterated its support for India’s claim for a permanent membership of the UNSC describing her as a

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<sup>88</sup> See for details Yuri F. Fedotov as quoted by Debidatta Aurobindo Mahapatra, Note 23, p.142

<sup>89</sup> Ibid

deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership in an expanded UN Security Council<sup>90</sup>.

The historic visit of the then Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee to Russia in mid November 2003 became another landmark in the close and strategic relations between the two countries. Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Vladimir Putin signed 10 accords in the Kremlin after in-depth talks. They proposed a consistent and uncompromising approach in tackling the menace of terrorism and called for giving up double standards in dealing with the problem. In a declaration by Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Putin, the two countries proposed a concrete and time bound action plan to be adopted for the earliest restoration of Iraq's sovereignty under the aegis of the United Nations<sup>91</sup>. President Putin also reiterated that cross border terrorism must end and the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan must be dismantled as a prerequisite to peace in South Asia, which could follow from a purposeful dialogue. There was complete agreement between the two leaders that international problems could be solved only through collective action with the help of the United Nations.

During Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit, both countries called for the promotion of confidence among members of the anti-terrorist coalition by giving due consideration to the interests of each one of them and ensuring that the fight against terrorism was based on rules of international law and the UN charter. Both India and Russia favoured the effective implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 aimed against those who support, fund or abet terrorists or provide them shelter or asylum to engage in cross-border terrorism. On Israeli Palestinian conflict, Indian

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<sup>90</sup> For details see Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.94.

<sup>91</sup> See for details Manohar Singh Batra, "Significance of Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership", Note 54, p.79.

Prime Minister Vajpayee and Russian President Putin called for the prevention of the failure of the roadmap to settle the problem<sup>92</sup>. Both the leaders reiterated that India and the Russian Federation strongly believe that Afghanistan should emerge as a peaceful, strong, prosperous, united and independent nation that would be free from external interference and living in peace and harmony with its neighbors. They also favoured the efforts of the countries concerned and the international community for a peaceful settlement of the nuclear Issue on the Korean peninsula and maintaining its non nuclear status. India and Russia also affirmed that the future international order based on multipolarity should be determined by collective and multilateral processes rather than unilateral ones. Addressing the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee said “the Indo-Russian strategic partnership was a reliable factor in promoting peace, security and stability both in Asia and the world”. The fundamental factor behind the stability of Indo-Russian ties is the exemplary sensitivity both countries show to each other's concerns, including security concerns<sup>93</sup>. Prime Minister Vajpayee found India and Russia putting up a strong fight against terrorism, as this phenomenon was posing a grave threat to the entire civilized world, “specifically the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of both India and Russia”<sup>94</sup>.

Keeping the above mentioned realities of South Asia into consideration there is enough scope for Indo-Russian bilateral cooperation to address the national security issues of the two countries. The two countries can take many unilateral, bilateral and multilateral steps to make South Asia, a peaceful zone for human progress and prosperity. The then Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov after his meeting with Indian Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha at Moscow gave a statement that India and

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid, p.91.

<sup>93</sup> For details see Atal Behari Vajpayee as quoted by Manohar Singh Batra, Note 54, p.81.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

Russia would continue their support to the Karzai Government in its efforts to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan<sup>95</sup>.

Both India and Russia had common stakes in the turn of events in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Alexander Kadakin, the then Russian Ambassador to India, rightly pointed out in the background of Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to Moscow in November 2003 that “New Delhi's views on the situation in Afghanistan and Iraq are consonant with the assessments of our diplomacy”<sup>96</sup>.

Addressing in the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow Prime Minister Vajpayee stressed the interest of both the countries in the evolution of a multipolar world based on a “cooperative security order”. We are both opposed to unilateralism in international matters, Prime Minister Vajpayee said<sup>97</sup>. Highlighting that the Indo-Russian relations remained unaffected by the turbulent changes that had taken place in the world, the Indian Prime Minister visualized a bright future for bilateral relationship between the two countries, but, he emphasized that they should not rest on “past laurels”, as this could lead to stagnation<sup>98</sup>. They must strengthen the economic basis of their relationship since “neither India nor Russia perceives a threat from the strength of the other. On the contrary, each sees a benefit for itself in the increase of political and economic strength of the other”, Prime Minister Vajpayee said<sup>99</sup>. Prime Minister Vajpayee expressed deep concern about the phenomenon of global terrorism and appreciated Russia's consistent support to India's efforts in combating terrorism in this region. President Putin minced no words in his address to the Indian Parliament three years ago, when he said the same individuals, the same terrorists and extremist

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<sup>95</sup> See for details Igor Ivanov as quoted by G.M. Shah, “New Trends in Indo-Russian Relations-A Futuristic Study”, Note 65, p.183.

<sup>96</sup> For details see Alexander Kadakin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 16, p.90.

<sup>97</sup> See for details A.B. Vajpayee as quoted by Manohar Singh Batra, Note 54, p.80

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

organizations are involved in terrorist acts from the Philippines to Kosovo, including those in Kashmir, Afghanistan and Chechnya<sup>100</sup>. He further said that the two countries had established a sound legal basis and a useful institutional mechanism for cooperation in the struggle against international terrorism.

The new government of India led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reaffirmed the importance to further strengthen strategic partnership between India and the Russian Federation. The tradition of high level exchange between the two countries continues. Annual summit level exchange not only demonstrate the continued desire of the two sides to further build upon the strategic partnership relations but also offer an opportunity to conduct a comprehensive bilateral dialogue at the highest political level. In its second meeting held in April 2004 in New Delhi, both the sides agreed to deepen their counter terrorism cooperation in particular through:

1. Exchange of information and sharing of experiences in their fight against international terrorism.
2. Strengthening cooperation in curbing trafficking in narcotics
3. Continuing cooperation to address the threat of terrorist financing
3. Extending support for the full and effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 and the work of the Security Council's Counter Terrorism Committee.
4. Continuing consultations on the comprehensive Convention on Terrorism and the Convention against acts of Nuclear Terrorism with a view to their finalization.

The December 3-5, 2004 visit of Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation to India has been another milestone in the strategic partnership and time-

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<sup>100</sup> See for details President Putin as quoted by Manohar Singh Batra, Note 54, p.81.

tested friendship between the two countries. Apart from the multi-faceted cooperation and bilateral relations between these two major countries in the world arenas, their determination to expand the area of their collaboration in the interest of their peoples and to enhance the cause of universal peace are the factors which are too important to be overlooked by the rest of the world. After a little hiccup, his candid and articulate support for India's permanent membership of the Security Council in a reformed UN, with full veto power, has warmed the hearts of Indians<sup>101</sup>. Russia's coming out with unstinted support in India's favour is a positive step in its efforts to garner affirmative votes and build a conducive world environment for this country being treated on par with other world powers. President Putin emphatically said that India cannot be a permanent member of the Security Council with a second rank and it should have full rights including the veto power<sup>102</sup>.

The two countries have agreed to intensify exchanges in bilateral relations at political and parliamentary levels, between the Security Councils and at official levels. The significant degree of convergence in the overall perspective as well as interests of the two sides, have enabled Indo-Russian relations to withstand the test of time. They recognized that their cooperation will strengthen strategic stability in Asia and the world as a whole. Priority of attention will be paid to coordination of efforts through the Joint Working Group on Combating Global Challenges and the Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism. India regards Russia as a major and fully active member of the international community, and as a country whose voice

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<sup>101</sup> See for details Manohar Singh Batra, "India-Russia Reiterate Their Strategic Partnership", Note 54, p.279.

<sup>102</sup> See for details President Putin as quoted by Manohar Singh Batra, Note 54, p.280.

commands respect and attention on issues of global concern<sup>103</sup>. In this context, the Indian side strongly supports the earliest possible accession of Russia to the World Trade Organization. Both sides regard this support as an important demonstration of Indo-Russian relations of strategic partnership, and express their desire to develop after the accession of Russia to the WTO, cooperation within that organization, based on the principles of mutual benefit<sup>104</sup>.

The declaration further stated that both sides agreed that the twenty-first century presents new challenges. In a globalized world, there are inherent inter-linkages not only between countries, but also between issues. Both sides recognized the indivisibility between security and prosperity in the present-day world. They agree that the most effective way to address contemporary challenges is through multilateral approaches based on the widest possible international support. Multilateralism is an instrument to work towards the objective of a multi-polar world. Since the UN system is at the centre of multilateralism, both sides agreed to cooperate closely at the UN and in other international organizations. Both sides emphasize the necessity of comprehensive reforms in the UN system as to reflect both the enlarged membership in the UN and the contemporary realities. India and Russia emphasized that the expansion of the UNSC is an urgent imperative to make the Security Council more representative and effective. In this framework, the Russian Federation reiterates once again that it regards India as an influential and major member of the international community. The Russian Federation reaffirms its support to India as a deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership in an expanded UN Security Council.

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<sup>103</sup> See for details Manohar Singh Batra, "India-Russia Reiterate Their Strategic Partnership", Note 54, p.281.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

In the joint declaration, India and Russia reaffirmed their common resolve to fight terrorism. They reiterated that global terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and condemn in the strongest terms all acts of terrorism irrespective of their motivation, whenever and by whomsoever committed. They are underscoring that there can be no justification for terrorism on any grounds, including ideological, religious, racial, and ethnic or any other. They believe that the fight against terrorism has to be long-term, sustained and comprehensive. They emphasized the need for giving substance and credibility to the global fight against terrorism and avoid selective approaches and political expediency. With the recent targeting of open societies around the world, India and Russia, as two large and influential democracies, have reasons to be concerned about the vulnerability of democracies to terrorist attacks, because, terrorism exploits the strengths of democracies such as the protection of human rights, freedom of expression and movement. As per the joint declaration, both countries welcomed the unanimous adoption of the UN Security Council resolution 1566 noting that it seeks to consider action against terrorists including sanctions and judicial action.

Both countries decided to actively cooperate with each other in counter-terrorism. Both India and Russia reaffirmed that proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials, particularly the risk of their falling into the hands of terrorists constitutes a threat to international peace and security<sup>105</sup>. As strategic partners India and Russia affirmed their commitment to cooperate bilaterally as well as through appropriate multilateral forums towards contributing to this objective. Both India and Russia reaffirmed their commitment to

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid, p.283.

support efforts to prevent the deployment of weapons in outer space while preserving it for peaceful and cooperative activities aimed at developmental benefits.

The two sides expressed concern over continuing violence in Iraq and stressed the need for an intra-Iraqi dialogue aimed at building national consensus on a new constitution and on restoring stability and security in that country. India and the Russian Federation advocate strict compliance of the UN Security Council Resolution 1546, particularly with regard to the interim timetable of political process stipulated by it with a view to facilitating the formation of a new, democratic Iraq<sup>106</sup>. Both countries supported the objective of a lasting, just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, based on relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council. They also welcomed the successful conclusion of the Presidential elections in Afghanistan and emphasized the importance of efforts at national reconciliation and unity. Both the countries support a strong, united, sovereign and independent Afghanistan. They also reiterated their support for reconstruction of Afghanistan, particularly they expressed their concern at the threat to security especially in the South and South-Eastern provinces, and also over the increased cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan. They underlined the need for effective steps to counteract the drug and terrorist menace. India and Russia expressed their determination to further enhance the all-round relations of partnership and close interaction.

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004, President Putin delivered the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Lecture in New Delhi. Apart from paying tributes to Mr. Nehru as a true patriot, thinker and outstanding humanist, he praised his legacy, which belonged to all mankind. He stressed that the world was facing threats of international terrorism and

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid, p.284.

organized crime. There was a great danger of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the weapons falling into the hands of terrorists. According to President Putin no dictatorship, especially in international affairs could solve such problems even if this dictatorship was packaged in a pretty wrapping of pseudo-democratic phraseology<sup>107</sup>. Only balanced system of international law and the ability of the international community would ensure adherence to accepted norms. Russia and India are proactive and constructive participants in the process and they are striving for a just world order. They believe that the central coordinating role in drafting a collective response to contemporary threats should belong to the UN. The Russian Federation is open to sensible models of reform in the UN, particularly-the expansion of the Security Council. However, any possible reform must be conducted on the basis of broad consensus. President Putin repeated Russia's principled position to support the candidacy of India as a future permanent member of the Security Council<sup>108</sup>. He found this right after having witnessed the country's rapidly developing international influence and economic potential.

With regard to terrorism, President Putin's view was that terrorism cannot and must not be used as an instrument in geo-political games or interests<sup>109</sup>. He hinted at the Russian initiative in presenting Resolution 1566 in the UN Security Council, which was duly adopted, as an extremely important measure. It obliges every state to bring terrorists, their accomplices and sponsors to justice without fail. Putin pointed out that terrorism could not be identified with any particular religious or ethnic group.

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<sup>107</sup> See for details President Putin as quoted by Manohar Singh Batra, Note 54, p.285.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 286.

He warned that terrorists and their backers could gain from unleashing a conflict between civilizations and religions, and setting nations against each other.

This was a framework of another special relationship, expanding cooperation, and multiplying contacts in various fields, some of them of critical importance to India. The Indo-Russian relations were strengthened by the highly successful visit of the Indian Premier to the Russian Federation in 2005. In a statement to the Press at the conclusion of his visit, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh spoke of the need “to anticipate what measures we need to take to meet new and emerging opportunities for further strengthening of our strategic partnership, in meeting our respective national priorities as well as in pooling our efforts in sharing global responsibilities”<sup>110</sup>.

For India, the real strength lies in the bilateral relationship with Russia, the only country which has supported India consistently on the two vital issues, Kashmir and India’s inclusion in the UN Security Council. Moreover, both countries desire a multipolar world and are committed to fight terrorism without making distinctions between terrorists and freedom fighters. Both are committed to an early adoption by the General Assembly of the comprehensive convention of international terrorism and the international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. Both the countries have similar views on Iraq, Afghanistan, and the need for security and stability in the Central Asian Republics. India had also assured Russia that it will support Russia’s entry into the World Trade Organizations and will also sign the Intellectual Property Rights agreements in 2005. This made India and Russia strategic partners. President Putin responded by stating that Russia welcomes the fact that India

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<sup>110</sup> See for details Manmohan Singh as quoted by Krishan Gopal, in “India and Russia: The Ambit of Strategic Partnership”, Note 3, p.87.

has the status of an observer in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization<sup>111</sup>. He maintained that Russia intends to work closely with the Indian partners in the multilateral organizations in the Asia-pacific region. On the issues of combating international terrorism, religious extremism and drugs and arms trafficking, India and Russia have similar interests and have been cooperating with each other. The two leaders also discussed the Iranian nuclear programme and expressed the hope that the issue would be resolved at the level of IAEA.

Sharing concern over the expanding web of global terrorism India and Russia discussed ways to increase cooperation to fight the threat more effectively at the meeting of Joint Working Group on counter terrorism held in October .The Indian side was led by K.C. Singh, Additional Secretary (International Organizations) and the Russian side delegation was headed by Anatoly Safonov, Special Representative of President Putin on terrorism. The two countries sought urgent implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1642, which prohibits incitement of terrorism, and strongly favored early establishment by the UN of a global legal framework for fighting terror. They underlined the need for more efficient measures to prevent propagation of terrorism, including in cyberspace, and agreed to enhance cooperation to prevent terrorists from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. The Joint Working Group shared concerns over terrorism financing and agreed to strengthen bilateral interaction in curbing this activity as its prevention is the key component in counter terrorism strategy. The two countries strongly advocated the need for early implementation of the International Convention on Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism saying it would facilitate the objective of preventing WMD terrorism. They

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<sup>111</sup> See for details President Putin as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, in “Prime Minister’s Moscow Visit”, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.29, No.4, October-December, 2005, p.732.

also discussed their concern over the increase in the spread of drugs in the region and agreed that this directly threatened the security of both countries.

Given the constructive Indo-Russian interaction, it may not be an exaggeration to claim that post-Cold War transitional difficulties are now left well behind. On the occasion of India's Republic day in January, the Indian President Abdul Kalam, said, "Russia highly assesses and earnestly cherishes its noble ties of friendship and multifaceted cooperation with India which, in recent years, has evolved into a strategic partnership of the two nations"<sup>112</sup>.

The strength of the relationship lies in the continuing of complementary interests. Neither India nor Russia can tolerate the dominance of any single power in the global community and in the region. American power and China's potential power in Asia are realities with which both India and Russia have already come to terms with. Indeed, both powers may have actually learned to use these powers to promote their own interests, as can be seen in the war on terrorism and on other issues such as on nuclear weapons and ABMs. But these are strategies of weaker powers, and both countries will be more comfortable balancing against these powers than bandwagon with them. As both India and Russia grow stronger, their mutual interests in countering the dominance of any single power in global and Asian politics will only bring them even closer.

During the January 2007 visit of Russian president Putin to India, nine agreements were signed; and the statements made around them reveal some important points. First, that India-Russia relation is a process based on continuity embedded in trust. Second, they stand out in sharp contrast to the kind of strategic relations that the

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<sup>112</sup> See for details President Abdul Kalam as quoted by K.K. Nayyar, in "Indo-Russian Strategic Cooperation", Note 65, p.78.

US is building with India. Third, that it is possible for India to have an independent foreign policy without getting dependent on any other strategic relationship. At the end of March, 2007 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia had published a document on 'The Review of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation'. The document says, one of the priorities in Russian foreign policy is to develop and deep strategic partnership with India along all lines in political, trade and economic, scientific and technical, military and technical, as well as in cultural spheres<sup>113</sup>. We should lay the main emphasis on promotion such spheres of interaction where our long-term interests are close or coincide. The declaration of strategic partnership also provides for closer cooperation at the UN. During this visit, he said in support of complete integration of India into Shanghai Organization of Cooperation. Russia favours the proposal of India to form a united front of champions in their struggle against international terrorism and appreciates the efforts of India in this regard. Putin held that "our countries had clashed with terrorism and that is why Russia and India have general understanding of the essence and principles of antiterrorist struggle. We recognize that international terrorism is a global threat and that there is only one way to withstand it that is to join and mobilize efforts to combat this menace".

In February 2008, the Russian Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov visited to India. During his tour he said our two countries are engaged in various political dialogues. We will carry forward this dialogue during my visit. Russian-Indian cooperation is diverse and multi-faceted and we have many subjects for discussion. Mr. Viktor Zubkov said that India evokes the most positive feelings among his countrymen. For

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<sup>113</sup> See for details Konstantin Kurylev, "Russian and India: The Commonality of Interests", Note 3, p.130.

us India is a trusted friend<sup>114</sup>. There is a saying in Russia “one old friend is better than two new ones”, he said.

India and Russia strengthened their existing bilateral ties by declaring open the year of Russia in India in 2008. The function was inaugurated jointly by Indian Prime Minister and his Russian counterpart Victor Zubkov. In his address Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said India and Russia were firmly bound together by civilizational linkages and relations between the two countries were time tested and based on solid foundation. He said, such festivals were last held in our countries about two decades ago. It is heartening that our two great pluralistic democracies are actively undertaking joint efforts towards further enhancing our people to people contact, which has been an important asset for our time-tested friendship<sup>115</sup>. Dr. Singh said such intensive engagements were reflective of not only deep mutual trust and goodwill, but also symbolized the depth and dynamism acquired by multi-dimensional cooperation, which today stands transformed into strategic partnership.

Russia’s new foreign policy doctrine assigns higher priority to relations with India and projects Moscow’s more assertive posture in the world. The foreign policy concept paper, approved by President Dmitry Medvedev two months after taking office, defines relations with India as Russia’s “most important vector” in Asia. The 2000 doctrine referred to India as “one of the most important” Asian priorities for the Kremlin. For the first time the Russian foreign doctrine describes relations with India as “strategic” for Russia<sup>116</sup>. The passage on India gives greater emphasis to political and economic cooperation between Moscow and Delhi compared with the previous doctrine. “In deepening the strategic partnership with India, Russia pursues the

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<sup>114</sup> For details see The Hindu, February 11, 2008.

<sup>115</sup> See for details The Hindu, February 13, 2008.

<sup>116</sup> See for details The Hindu, July 16, 2008.

principled policy towards stronger interaction on burning international problems and all-round strengthening of mutually beneficial relations in all spheres, especially in achieving a substantial uplift in commercial and economic ties,” said the foreign policy concept.

The Present Russian President Dmitry Medvedev will be the first world leader to travel to India after the Mumbai tragedy in November 2008. In a telephone call to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Mr. Medvedev proposed focusing during their talks in Delhi on the rising terrorist threat and concerted efforts to counter it. The summit is an opportunity for India and Russia to jointly promote a global strategy for combating terrorism that would be free from double standards and self-serving interests, and would unite the world rather than divide it. The terrorist attacks in Mumbai is an act of intimidation against not only India but also the other BRIC nations,” said Russia’s Upper House Speaker Sergei Mironov<sup>117</sup>.

India and Russia can best respond to the challenge of terrorism by strengthening all-round strategic partnership. A Kremlin-connected expert says Mr. Medvedev, just as his predecessor Vladimir Putin, fully appreciates the role of India as Russia’s trusted partner. “Strategic ties with India will make Russia a stronger global player and Mr. Medvedev is well aware of India’s importance for Russia,” says Dr. Iosif Diskin, co-chairman of the National Strategy Council, an influential Russian think tank. Strategic partnership between India and Russia declared in 2000 is like a tripod whose two legs-political interaction and defence ties- are strong, whereas the third leg trade is so fragile that may cause the entire structure to flip over. The Russian Parliament voiced indignation at the Mumbai terror attack and called for early approval of an Indian drafted anti-terrorist convention. “There can be no justification

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<sup>117</sup> See for details The Hindu, December 4, 2008.

for the atrocities committed by terrorist outfits, no matter what ethnic and religious disguise they done”, the Duma, Lower House said in a statement unanimously<sup>118</sup>. The Duma statement expressed concern over the deadlocked discussion at the United Nations on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism tabled by India and called for its adoption at the earliest to provide the main legal basis for fighting terrorism.

The Russian President’s visit to India assumed added significance as Medvedev was the first world leader to enter our country after the dastardly terrorist attack on Mumbai. Obviously, terrorism was pushed to the top of the agenda. Both countries are victims of this menace. Expressing strong solidarity with the Indian government and people, Medvedev pledged to “work with India on the whole spectrum of the problem and provide support in all directions.” The Joint Declaration signed by President Medvedev and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh urges the international community to provide all assistance in bringing to justice the organizers of the latest attack on India’s financial capital. It calls all countries to actively cooperate with India in its efforts to find the masterminds, perpetrators and sponsors of this barbaric act.

The strategic nature of the relationship is reflected in India’s support of Russia in maintaining peace and security in the Caucasus<sup>119</sup>. The Indo-Russian joint statement at the end of the summit, welcoming the Medvedev-Sarkozy plan to resolve the Caucasus problem, highlighted Russia’s importance in ensuring peace and cooperation in the region. India became virtually the first major state, outside the

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> See details *Russia Now*, December 18, 2008.

Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) and the Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation, to support Moscow's leading role in maintaining peace and security in the Caucasus. This is very important for Russia.

India and Russia discussed all major regional issues of mutual concern during the two-day summit. On the situation in Afghanistan, where both countries hold major stakes, Delhi and Moscow came out in favour of a democratic and pluralist Afghanistan and welcomed the country's admission into the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) as a fully-fledged member. Both expressed serious concern over the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan as a result of rehabilitating Taliban forces, Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups, proliferation of trans-border terrorism and links with international terrorism and the global drugs ring. India welcomes Russia's initiative for organizing an international conference on Afghanistan, in the framework of SCO, with the participation of all its members and observer nations.

Emphasizing the role of SCO in Central Asia, Russia has extended its support of a "more active role for India" as an observer country in the organization. India, expressing its gratitude to Russia for the support, hopes for more active participation and greater contribution to the organization's future activities. The Asia-Pacific region is another area where both countries strive to have a more decisive influence. Both countries have expressed intentions to strengthen co-operation through various organizations including ASEAN, ARF and Dialogue for Co-operation in Asia. A significant point in the joint declaration is the call to resolve the Iran issue through peaceful means of dialogue and negotiation. While appealing to all sides to demonstrate flexibility and restraint, India and Russia uphold Iran's right to conduct research, in the production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in

accordance with the terms of the NPT and other international obligations<sup>120</sup>. The Middle East is another hotspot on which Delhi and Moscow share a similar approach. They called for a comprehensive, long-lasting and fair resolution of the Arab-Israel conflict on the basis of UNSC resolutions 242, 338, 1397 and 1515, through peaceful negotiations that would lead to the creation of a sovereign, independent and united Palestinian state.

For analytical reasons, Russia's foreign policy towards India has been classified into three phases: The first phase from 1991 to 1995 has been marked by the period of uncertainties and confusions. The second phase corresponds the period between 1995 to 2000, when India's place in the Russian foreign policy scheme of things had been reprioritized thereby viewing India as a dependable and reliable partner. Finally, the third phase, which starts from the year 2000 onwards could be marked as the process of constructive engagement. It was during this third phase that Moscow moved in the direction of consolidating its ties with New Delhi.

Strategic cooperation between the countries has been of utmost importance from a diplomatic point of view. India and Russia share strategic cooperation for decades, as it is very much important for the countries. Both India and Russia have common geopolitical and geostrategic interests. The disturbed Central Asia, which is geographically close to both the countries, is a cause of tensions for both India and Russia. Both the countries share common problems like international terrorism and drug trafficking. Russia supports India on Kashmir issue, and strongly advocates in favour of India for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. India too

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<sup>120</sup> See for details Arun Mohanty, "Medvedev Visit to India: A Significant Indo-Russian Summit", *Mainstream*, Vol. XLVII, No. 1, December 20, 2008, p.104.

support Russia's stand on issues like Kosovo and Chechnya. India and Russia are close to each other to check the growing influence of the US and China in the South Asian sub-continent. Russia's cooperation to India is also a step by Russia to maintain its past glory, which it has lost after the collapse of the Soviet Union. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world has changed into a unipolar world in military sphere and a multipolar world in economic sphere. In order to counteract the US influence and Chinese hegemony, India and Russia have joined hands with each other. Both Russia and India are working towards emergence of a multipolar world order. By maintaining a cordial relationship with India, Russia wants to make its presence felt in the subcontinent. Western negligence to India and continuous US diplomatic and military support to Pakistan have compelled India to look towards Russia. Russia has also extended a helping hand towards India. Bilateral ties between India and Russia have made friendship stronger by visits of leaders and diplomats of both the countries and by conclusion of various treaties and agreements. Today the world and various international bodies admire and appreciate the way both India and Russia have maintained their relationship for decades. Leaders in both the countries hope that such cooperation will make both the countries move in the path of mutual benefit and help for maintain their security and territorial integrity.

Starting from the emergence of the Indian nation (1947) to the breakdown of the Soviet Union (1991), and starting from the emergence of new Russia till the recent period, a dual pattern can be identified in the relations. Like the initial hesitation of the Soviet Union to meddle into the South Asian affairs, the initial years of new Russia was marked by negligence, though the factors behind this similarity were totally different. As the Russian leaders gradually realized the importance of India we notice a tilt towards India. Factors like terrorism, problems in Chechnya and Kashmir, the

rise of Islamic extremism; attempts to subdue the role of international organizations and democracy are matters of common interest. Russian President Putin, in contrast to other Russian leaders, has been able to steer Russia's foreign policy to guard its national interests with pragmatism and cautious optimism. His approach towards India is marked by an understanding of India's emergence as a regional power and appreciation of India's stand on various issues. The two countries clearly have no clash of interests and virtually no antagonism against each other.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin's visit to India in 1993 marked the beginning of a new era in Indo-Russian relationship. Their bilateral strategic partnership stood for, Russia puts, pressure on Pakistan on Taliban issue and sets up joint Working Group. Russian support to fight against Terrorism in general and Taliban in particular. Russia endorses India's stand on CTBT. Russia supports India's candidature for UN seat. Mutual support, for disarmament. Russian cooperation in the nuclear field in spite of International pressure. Defence deal particularly joint marketing and joint production. The Russian President public espousal of India's Permanent membership of UN Security Council with full veto powers does not only under-score India's global aspirations but also under-writes with value-added emphasis that Russia is serious about a substantive strategic partnership with India. As the two countries observed in 2007 the diamond jubilee of the establishment of their diplomatic relations, this is how India's External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, in an interview to the Russian media (ITAR-TASS, RIA Novosti and "Trud") put it: "going by its content and durability, Indo-Russian partnership is simply unparalleled in our post independence diplomatic history." I do not think it could have been put any better. Writing in the Indian media (Hindustan Times, April 13, 2007) the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, expressed similar views and sentiments when he said, "Russia highly values

its relations with India. We entered the twenty first century as strategic partners. The experience of sixty years of diplomatic relations is strengthening our belief that mutually beneficial Russian Indian cooperation will be enhanced, benefiting our countries and helping to bring about global peace and stability”. The Russian President public espousal of India’s Permanent membership of UN Security Council with full veto powers does not only under-score India’s global aspirations but also under-writes with value-added emphasis that Russia is serious about a substantive strategic partnership with India. This was sentimentally articulated by President Putin on his final leg of the tour at Bangalore that, “we don’t have problem between our two states. Our two nations are allies and friends or years to come. We are natural allies.”

## Chapter : IV

### **Indo-Russian Relations (1991-2008): Military Dimensions**

Strategic partnership, as we have pointed out in the previous chapter of this thesis, encompasses features such as mutual trust, shared interests and concerns in addition to each other's security and territorial integrity. On Indo-Russian strategic partnership, former Russian President Yeltsin had said that the basic interests of both Russia and India coincide. President Putin added that, strategic partnership does not mean creating some kind of military alliances or blocs. When India and Russia say strategic, both the countries mean long term partnership in keeping with the pragmatic national interests of the two countries, especially, in the era of globalization and increasing competition in the world scene. Military relationship is an important element of Indo-Russian strategic partnership. It may be argued that it is the corner stone or an "important pillar" (as the Indian Prime Minister terms it) of Russia-India strategic partnership.

Indo-Russian defence ties have remained strong for a variety of technical, economic and political reasons. For Russia, India is a long-time friend and customer. Arms exports comprise a large portion of the country's economy, and thus continued access to the Indian arms market provides a valuable source of revenue to Russia. It also contributes to goodwill from India, which seems likely to remain important to Moscow as India's international status grows in the years ahead. Moreover, Russia gains some degree of political leverage over India. Indian dependence on strategic

technologies acts as something of a wedge between Indian and the West and complicates New Delhi's relations with Washington. For India, Russia offers a number of advantages over other suppliers. Russian hardware is of good quality; it is hardy and durable (operable in hot and cold theatres of operation) and is price competitive. Russian firms and officials are familiar with the Indian arms market, the defence bureaucracy, and the procurement process. Russia has proved itself (over several decades) to be reliable long-term arms supplier and one that does not attach strings to weapons sales. In addition to this type of cultural familiarity, there is a technical familiarity with Russian equipment within the Indian armed forces and Indian companies. The services in India understand Russian technology and engineering. They have grown accustomed to it and have little difficulty in operating it or modifying it to suit their own needs. Russian equipment can also be more easily integrated with the existing weapons systems. Lastly, Russia has proved far more willing to collaborate with India on joint ventures and has been more generous in terms of technology transfers and licensing agreements.

Indo-Russian defence cooperation in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 got a severe jolt, first, due to new Russia's pro-Western tilt, and second due to poor relations accumulated by many factors, out of which one is certainly the diversion of interests of both the countries. While more than half of the Indian defence requirements were supplied by the Soviet Union, its collapse suddenly reduced the percentage of supply. As a result India searched for other suppliers. The first half of the nineties was very slow in defence cooperation between the two countries, thus motivating the then Indian Defence Minister Sharad Pawar to visit other countries such as Ukraine for defence purposes. The conditions later improved, especially with

the visit of Russian President Yeltsin to India in 1993 and visits to Russia by Indian Prime Ministers Narasimha Rao and Deve Gowda in 1994 and 1997 respectively. In the current scenario, it can be said that Indo-Russian defence cooperation is the best part of their relations, as Russia has once again become India's largest arms supplier.

In the initial period of Indo-Russia military relations, the Russian defence industry was very keen to restore defence ties with the large and lucrative Indian defence market. India too was equally keen on the restoration of the supply of defence equipments and spare parts from Russia, as 60% - 70% of Indian defence equipments had been of the Soviet origin. In concrete terms India's reliance on the Russian defence supplies had three distinct advantages. First, Russian aircrafts, ships and tanks enjoyed significant price advantages over comparable Western equipments. Second, the period between the signing of contract and delivery of weapons was normally a year in contrast to the two three year time taken by the West. In this context the former Foreign Secretary of India, Mr. Kanwal Sibal said that, defence, space, science and technology are the building blocks of the bilateral strategic partnership between the two countries. He said that there was a tendency in both the countries to see Indo-Russian relations in terms of defence only<sup>1</sup>. Pramitpal Chaudhri characterized Indo-Russian defence relations in a geopolitical sense. According to him, Russia took India as a defence partner because the former had global interests, notably and a desire to reduce the US influence in the Indian sub-continent.

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<sup>1</sup> See for details J. Srinivas, "Where Are Indo-Russian Relations Headed?", available on [http://www.indiadefence.com/indo\\_rus1.htm](http://www.indiadefence.com/indo_rus1.htm).

Indo-Russian defence cooperation goes beyond just a buyer-seller relationship. There are enough examples to show that Russia is interested not only in selling its arms and related equipments to India, but also in helping India become self reliant in the field of weapons production. It is this willingness on the part of Russia, to see India emerge as a strong and self reliant nation, which is expressed in the form of arms producing joint ventures between the two nations. Russia, unlike the US, in its defence dealings with India, has never been so tricky as to deny the technical know-how involved in the production of weapons it sells to India. What is more, today's Russia is more than willing to have India as a partner in defence productions. On the other hand, India, while buying arms for its military would in all likelihood not compromise on quality for the sake of prices. It means that it is not so much because of the relatively low price Russian arms as because of their proven technical superiority and reliability that India goes for Russia. Thus Indo-Russian defence cooperation comes across as a relationship in which both the countries without in the least possible manner are compromising on their non-negotiable national interests and knowing very well as to which side their bread is buttered and are able to find ways for mutually reinvigorating and re-enforcing each other. This perhaps is the uniqueness of Indo-Russian defence relations. Secondly, what makes Indo-Russian defence relations stand out is the fact of their having been formally institutionalized. Russia has formal MTC (Military Technical Cooperation) with India, and an Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation has been established to facilitate the matters. This element of formal institutionalization which is not a usual feature of bilateral defence dealings makes Indo-Russian defence partnership a rare breed. Third and the most important factor is that, defence dealings between any two countries must be perceived

in the context of space, liberty and politico moral supports the seller country gives to the buyer in using the arms it sells. Looked at from this viewpoint the US, the biggest competitor of Russia, not only in the international arms market but also in terms of total arms exports to India, comes across as a nation, which sells the gun, but wants to keep the trigger with it. It comes across as a nation, which would like to dictate to its customers including India, where to use and where not to use the arms they buy from it. It is an area in which Russia scores not only over US but also over the other major arms suppliers to India. Russia has not only armed India but also shown a good understanding of Indian security threats. Having found itself in the same boat as India so far as the problems of secessionism stemming from the very composition of being a plural society, but abetted from across the border, are concerned Russia, unsurprisingly has shown a greater appreciation of Indian security needs. This unambiguous understanding shown by Russia of India's security problems and the continuous support Russia has extended over these problems make Russian arms more lucrative than their rivals. It is yet another particularity of Indo-Russian defence relations. And lastly there is a good degree of commonality between Russian and Indian global interests and needs. And if the recent behaviour of both the countries on international stage is any indicator, both the countries are conscious of these commonalities. It gives an additional reason why they view and should view their strategic relations as being special.

In the Post-Soviet era, Indo-Russian defence cooperation had undergone radical changes. The two countries were not only involved in joint defence research, but were also moving towards transfer of technology, joint production and marketing of military hardwares. Following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, India's

immediate concern was to safeguard the supply of spare parts for its MiG aircrafts. An Indian delegation, headed by the then Indian Defence Minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, visited Moscow in September 1991. But the new Russian government was preoccupied in dealing with unprecedented welter of domestic problems and Mr. Sharad Pawar returned empty handed. But Russia was aware that India was one of its best customers and was anxious to retain its (India's) arms market<sup>2</sup>. India's connections with Moscow always had a strong military side. Under the new regime, Russia was keen to continue its defence contracts with India. The receipts from defence contracts were in hard currency. Thus, despite the US pressure on Russia to stop military cooperation with India, Russia liked to strengthen her defence exports to India. The reasons for Russia's interests were clear. Russian military industries were in need of funds. Despite the initial problems faced by the breakup of the Soviet Union and dispersion of some defence industries, Russia revived the possibility of re-negotiating defence contracts and the contract on rocket and nuclear power technology with India.

In March 1992, Russia offered India, Charlie class nuclear powered submarines, MiG 31 aircrafts and SU-28 fighter-bombers. India's interests in these lay to counter the acquisition of Armada of French Mirage 2000 and the US F-16 by Pakistan. In May 1992, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Gennady Burbulis visited

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<sup>2</sup> See for details Anita Inder Singh, "India's Relations with Russia and Central Asia", *International Affairs*, Vol.71, No.1, 1995, p.74.

India and assured India of Russia's continued defence supplies<sup>3</sup>. However, it was declared that the new credits would be available at double the existing interest rates plus one tenth of the payment was required in advance. Over this issue, there was a spate of high-level military cooperation discussion between Russia and India in the final four months of 1992. The then Indian Defence Minister Mr. Sharad Pawar paid a visit to Russia in September 1992. During his visit, Russia expressed its willingness to clear the backlog of supply of military spares and equipments. Further two sides tried to map out how best to restore military links. Russia acknowledged that she had inherited obligations towards India and that remained a priority for Russia<sup>4</sup>. On returning to India, Mr. Sharad Pawar described his visit as extremely useful. In October-November 1992, the Chief of Indian Air Force, Air Chief Marshal Nirmal Suri visited Russia. On his return he said that Russia would shortly be resuming deliveries of spare parts and equipments for the Indian Air Force's MiG fighters.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin's visit to New Delhi in January 1993 was a milestone in Indo-Russian relations. During his visit, Indian Defence Minister Mr. Sharad Pawar and his Russian counterpart Pavel Grachev signed a new agreement on military cooperation on January 28, 1993, on the basis of which it was agreed that deliveries would be resumed at previous levels and product support and comprehensive services needed for maintenance, repair and modernization including

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<sup>3</sup> See for details Gennady Burbulis as quoted by Shashikant Jha, in "Indo-Russian Relations: In The Light of New Realities", in M.Rasgotra & V.D.Chopra, eds., *India's Relations with Russia and China: A New Phase* (Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 1997), p.85.

<sup>4</sup> For details see Poonam Mann, *India's Foreign Policy In The Post Cold War Era* (Harman Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000), P.28.

transfer of technology, training, visits, exchange of personnel and joint research and development of projects and third country exports would be made available.

In May 1994, Viktor Somoilov, the Director General of Roosvooruzheniye, the arms exporting company of Russia, visited India. He proposed a list of new exports exceeding 1.5 billion dollars, which included warships, combat aircrafts, helicopters, anti aircraft rocket systems and tanks. During the visit of Indian Prime Minister Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao in July 1994, both India and Russia signed the defence agreements by which Russia agreed to help India in the up-gradation of its 170 MiG aircrafts to keep them combat worthy well into the next century. The two sides formalized agreements to set up joint ventures in the field of civil and military aviation. Of particular importance was the Indo-Russian Aviation Private Limited, a joint venture company set up in India with an equity base of 400 million dollars to manufacture spare parts to upgrade and service military aircrafts of Russian origin being operated by India. Such ventures were to be based on commercial basis. During Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Yuri Yarov's visit to India in 1994, plans to setup engine overhaul plants for MiG-29s and for the up-grading of T-72 tanks were also finalized. At that time, the Indian Ambassador in Moscow, Ronen Sen, observed that, the joint venture symbolized a new type of defence relationship between India and Russia from 'buyer-seller' to 'participation and interaction' level<sup>5</sup>. The Chief of Indian Air Force, Air Chief Marshal S.K. Kaul, visited Russia in August 1994. Speaking to the Media on this occasion, General Samoilov, regarded the reports of possible sale of Russian arms to Pakistan as pure speculation aimed at creating misunderstanding

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<sup>5</sup> See for details Ronen Sen as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, *Russia and India: From Ideology to Geopolitics 1947-1998* (Dev Publication, Delhi, 1999), p.239.

between India and Russia. He added that Russia would not sell arms to Pakistan without consulting India first<sup>6</sup>. It was made clear that Russia would not take any steps that would upset the balance of power in South Asia or would be detrimental to the traditional partnership with India. The two countries made it clear that; their defence cooperation was not directed against any third country. Roosvorouzhnie Deputy Director General Stanislov Filin said that the sale of Russian arms to India had continued unhindered and Russia had provided weapons, equipment, accessories, and servicing facilities worth 1.5 billion dollars to India in 1995. He emphasized that defence cooperation was developing in accordance with the provisions of the agreements that existed between the two countries. Mr. Filin clarified that India was being supplied with MiG-20 and MiG-29, anti missile complexes, ammunition of various types and other defence equipments. According to him, Russia considered India its important partner in the field of military technical cooperation<sup>7</sup>. Russia also delivered two of the prototypes to the HAL unit in Bangalore, where work on its upgrading and flight-testing commenced. In December, 1994, Russian Premier Chernomyrdin visited India, and he reassured that his country had no plans to sell armaments to Pakistan<sup>8</sup>. During his visit eight agreements were signed, which covered military and technical cooperation from 1995 to 2000. According to Biplob Gogoi, an Indian journalist, it was hinted at the time of the visit of Russia's Defence Minister

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<sup>6</sup> See for details General Samoilov as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 5, p. 242.

<sup>7</sup> See details The Hindu, 21<sup>st</sup> April, 1996.

<sup>8</sup> See for details Chernomyrdin as quoted by Manohar Singh Batra, in "Significance of Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership", in V.D.Chopra ed., *Global Significance of Indo-Russian Strategic Relationship*, (Kalpaz Publications Delhi, 2005), p. 84.

Igor Rodionov to Delhi in October 1995 that the sale of Russian military equipment to India till 2000 could reach a figure of \$8 billion<sup>9</sup>.

A new dimension to their defence cooperation was inaugurated in 1996, when, for the first time India and Russia signed an agreement on Inter Services Exchanges<sup>10</sup>. That unique agreement also provided for exchanges of sensitive operational information. It was on 21st February 1996, that 3.5 billion dollars arms deal with Russia was in the offing. Stanislov Filin, the Deputy Head of Rosvooruzhenie said that the defence cooperation with India constituted about 40 percent of Russia's arms and military technology exports. He added that Russia regarded India as its strategic partner and could not contemplate any arms sales to Pakistan<sup>11</sup>. He further added that Russia did not want Pakistan to enlarge as a counter weight to India<sup>12</sup>. In March-April 1996, the Russian team participated in the second Indian International Civil and Defence equipment and systems exhibition and conference in New Delhi. The Russians were aware of the increasing competition in the international defence market. Leading arms industries of many countries were keen to sell their latest gadgetry to the Indian armed forces. The Russian exhibits included the state of art Sukhoi Combat Air Crafts, submarines, missile system, 155 mm guns, combat helicopters and anti aircraft systems. Oleg Sidorenko, the Deputy Director General of Rosvooruzhenie visited India during the conference. He impressed upon his hosts that his organization, that looked after the business deals of more than 80 arms industries of Russia, was giving lots of attention to spares provided to India. He assured that there would not be any

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<sup>9</sup> For details see Biplob Gogoi as quoted by K.R. Singh, in "New Parameters of Strategic Partnership" Note 8, p. 74.

<sup>10</sup> See for details Vinay Shukla, "Russia in South Asia: A View from India" in Gennady Chuftrin ed., *Russia and Asia: The Emerging Security Agenda*, (Oxford University Press, New York, 1999), p.266.

<sup>11</sup> See for details Stanislov Filin as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 5, p.248.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

problem in supplying defence spare parts to India in future. Numerous assurances were given to India from the Russian side that Russia would not supply arms to Pakistan. Further agreements were signed providing for deputations of military specialist in the context of maintenance of weapon systems and equipments of Russian origin with the visits by senior officers of the respective countries for participation in seminars and joint sporting and adventurous activities between Russian Defence Minister General I. Rodionov and his Indian counterpart Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav<sup>13</sup>. A contract for the purchase from Russia of 40 multi purposes SU-30 jet fighters was signed on November 30, 1996. This contract was worth 1.8 billions, which made it the biggest arms deal between India and the Russian Federation. It was signed in Irkutsk by visiting Indian Defence Secretary T.K. Benerji with the Russian arms trade company Rosvorzheniye and the Irkutsk Aviation Industrial Association, which manufactures SU-30 jet fighters. At the end of 1996, Oleg Sidorenko, Deputy Director of Rosvorzhenie, Russian arms export agency stated that negotiations were more than half way through and Russia expected to sell the system to India. India could have no trouble in integrating Russian system since its entire air defence system was based on Soviet weapons and technology<sup>14</sup>.

In 1997, India was the largest arms purchaser from Russia. Despite efforts to diversity sources of supply in the post Soviet period, India was turning to Moscow with a long and expensive purchase list for modern weaponry. Russia realized the possibilities and offered a new air defence system and a 10 billion arms deal. In

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<sup>13</sup> See for details Note 4, P.29.

<sup>14</sup> See for details Oleg Sidorenko as quoted by Afzal Mahmood, "The Bear Hugs the Cow", *Geopolitical Affairs*, available on [http://www.defencejournal.com/jan99/bear\\_hugs\\_cow.htm](http://www.defencejournal.com/jan99/bear_hugs_cow.htm).

February 1997, General Oleg Sidorenko, Deputy Director General of Rosvoruzheniye, the Russian arms exporting agency, signed a deal at the turn of the century according to which the Russian and Indian Air Forces would be inducting the state of the art multi-role aircrafts simultaneously under different names. He claimed that it was unprecedented for an exporting country to supply the latest technology to another power even before it was adopted by its own armed forces and that indicated the level of trust between India and Russia. Russia helped India to develop ships and submarines and upgrade its 125 MiG-21 BIS fighter aircrafts provided indigenously under Russian license, a fourth generation aircraft. In 1997 both states signed Military-Technology Cooperation Agreement and extended their bilateral defence cooperation till 2010<sup>15</sup>. According to A. Kislov and A Frolov, unlike China, arms trade with India is a successful example of relations with former Soviet client that Russia can do business on a long-term basis. India's policy towards Russia contains a very large measure of continuity. In October 1997 Indian Defence Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav visited Moscow and met the Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Economy Minister, Yakov Yurison, to work out modalities to establish a Joint Working Group for defence production. They also discussed cooperation in land weapons like artillery, rockets, guns and tanks. This was the third meeting of the joint Indo-Russian Working group about defence production. Russian President Yeltsin assured Yadav that Russia was prepared to give everything that India needed for its defence and security apparatus<sup>16</sup>. The Russian President also agreed to long-term defence cooperation with

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<sup>15</sup> See for details K.R. Singh, "New Parameters of Strategic Partnership" Note 8, p. 74.

<sup>16</sup> See for details President Yeltsin as quoted by Manohar Singh Batra, "Significance of Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership", Note 8, p. 85.

India until 2010. Russia delivered SU-30 fighter aircraft and other military hardware, including spare parts to India.

A direct reflection of strong commitment could be seen in post Pokhran-II phase. When India's nuclear test was conducted in 1998, Russia kept herself away from the coercive sanctions diplomacy of the USA. Russia categorically rejected the USA's suggestion that Moscow should stop military cooperation with New Delhi. As a Kremlin official maintained that the 'question of stopping defence cooperation with India had to be discussed in the context of the US military and technological cooperation with Israel, Saudi Arabia and its NATO allies on the close vicinity of Russian borders'<sup>17</sup>. In the immediate aftermath of Pokhran-II, Moscow in defiance against American pressure wrapped up 2.5 billion dollars deal with India to set up a nuclear power station at Koodankulam in Tamil Nadu .

Thereafter, Russia opened top-level hospitality to the visiting Indian Naval Chief Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat. During the visit, Russian hosts apprised Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat of the progress in the construction of three frigates and a kilo-class submarine purchased by India. The long-standing Russian proposal to sell the Admiral Gorshkov aircraft carrier to India was discussed. An agreement was signed to set up a Sub-Working Group for Defence Cooperation in the naval area. It indicated an expansion in ties in the areas of ship building and naval warfare and also qualitative

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<sup>17</sup> For details see Shams-Ud-Din & Bhaswati Sarkar, in "Indo-Russian Relations-An Overview", in Shams-Ud-Din, ed., *India & Russia towards Strategic Partnership* (Lancer's Books, New Delhi, 2001), p. 9.

shift from 'buyer-seller' relationship to joint research and development, cooperation and joint production<sup>18</sup>.

Long-term agreements for military and technological cooperation were signed on December 21, 1998, during Russia Prime Minister Yvgeny Primakov's visit to New Delhi. Mr. Primakov was accompanied by a high-powered delegation consisting of eight ministers and the Russian Army Chief Colonel General Yuri Dmitrievich. The two countries signed new agreements, which would be valid until 2010, and the value labeled was at around 15-17 billion dollars<sup>19</sup>. It put greater emphasis on joint research and development. Under the agreement, India was to conduct user trail in Russia while Russia would send experts to India to help with the integration and up-gradation of Russian weaponry according to India's need. The scheme had already been tried out in the modernization of India's MiG-21 and the up gradation of the SU-30's in to SU-30 MKI to improve their maneuverability firepower. At the same time during Primakov's visit the Russian Army Chief held meetings with the Indian Defence Minister and the chief of three services of Indian Defence Forces on security and equipment perspective in the light of defence cooperation up to 2010. During his meeting with the Indian Defence Minister, he suggested army to army cooperation between the two countries. The Air and Naval cooperation was also explored through the joint working groups<sup>20</sup>. An accord was signed by the two countries with a decision to strengthen their strategic relationship. At the same time, a MoU was signed with Russia for possible purchase of 44,500 tonnes aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov. It was not only

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> See for details Vinay Shukla, Note 10, p. 266.

<sup>20</sup> See for details in Mohd. Moazzam Ali, "Russia's Foreign Policy and the 'Strategic Partnership' Moves since 1991: Implications for India", in Shashikant Jha & Bhashwati Sarkar eds., *Amidst Turbulence and Hope Transition in Russia and Eastern Europe*, (Lancer's Books, New Delhi, 2002), P.242.

the formal relations between the two countries that had been institutionalized, but an Inter Governmental Commission on Defence and Technical Cooperation was also considered to structure long term defence linkages.

In March 22, 1999, Russia's Defence Minister Igor D. Sergeyev and India's Defence Minister George Fernandes signed an agreement on military cooperation for the training of Indian defence personnel in key Russian military academies<sup>21</sup>. The long-term military technology cooperation covered new areas of mutual cooperation such as naval and nuclear technologies and anti-ballistic missile systems. It prepared the ground for enhancing joint research and development capabilities of India and Russia in the production of new weapon systems. India was slated to be supplied with all up to date type of armaments including such weapons that were being adopted in the Russian army. The 44,500 ton Keiv-class aircraft carrier had been gifted to India by Russia. Progresses of the up-gradation of MiG-21 BIS fish bed fighters, constructions of three Kirvak class fighters of Indian Navy, modernization of T-n M MBT, procurement of T-90s MBT tanks for the Indian Army and S-300 V anti ballistic missile system were also discussed. On December 6, 1999, India and Russia signed a 10-year protocol providing for joint production and development of a whole range of military and civilian aircraft in India.

In June 2000, Indian Defence Minister George Fernandez visited Russia to negotiate new defence deals. An agreement was signed to upgrade military and technical cooperation and set up a Joint Commission at Defence Ministry level<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> See for details Manohar Singh Batra, "Significance of Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership", Note 8, p. 86.

<sup>22</sup> See for details The Hindu, 28th June, 2000

George Fernandez described his dialogue with the Russian President and the Russian Defence Minister as path breaking with 400 million dollars deal for the supply of 100 T - 90 MBT and for the production of another 200 MBT in India. It was also agreed that Russia would make complete delivery of SU-30 MKI fighter jets to India by 2003 as part of an earlier 1.8 billion dollar contract. The fighter jets would also be produced under transfer of license from Russia to India<sup>23</sup>. During the same period, both the countries set up an Indo-Russian Inter Governmental Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation (IGCMTC).

Russian President Putin's visit to India in October 2000 started a new phase in Indo-Russian relations. It had significantly contributed to the further deepening of the strategic dimensions of relations between the two countries by conclusion of ten agreements including defence deals worth 3 billion dollars<sup>24</sup>. The defence deals included a contract for the purchase and assembly of 310 T-90 tanks, the purchase of the Russian aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshvok, transfer of technology and licensed production of 140 Sukhoi 30 MKI multi role fighter aircrafts. The IGCMTC was to be headed by the Indian Defence Minister George Fernandez and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov jointly. The commission was to have two working groups and would meet annually. One group would be headed by the Defence Secretary of India and would deal with military and technical cooperation. The second one would be headed by the Secretary, Defence Production and would be involved in the production of ship building, aviation and land systems. The high point of the defence deal would be up-gradation and management of the Indo-Russian defence relations from an

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<sup>23</sup> See for details Times of India, 4th July, 2000

<sup>24</sup> For details see Devendra Kaushik, "India-Russia Relations: New Prospects", *World Focus*, Vol.24, No.1, January 2003, p.3

official to political level<sup>25</sup>. In October 2000, the Russian Deputy Prime Minister Klebonov and Indian National Security Council Advisor Brajesh Mishra signed a MoU to further develop the peaceful use of nuclear energy<sup>26</sup>. There was an agreement signed in the same year, for modernization of MiG-21BIS in the advanced stage, flight trail testing was on and up gradation was to be done by HAL in India through the subsequent transfer of technology from Russia, the modernization of MiG-27S was also being decided. The Indian DRDO (Defence Research Development Organisation) was collaborating with its Russian counterparts. The two sides also decided to encourage collaboration between the defence scientists, especially in the field of avionics<sup>27</sup>. Yevgeny Adornov, the former Atomic Energy Chief of Russia, during his visit to India in December 2000 said that, sanctions by the West on India were ‘unconstructive’ in forcing India to forfeit its nuclear option and pointed out that, Russia was against a policy of sanctions and did not impose them even when India conducted nuclear tests<sup>28</sup>. In December, 2000, India and Russia signed a defence deal for licensed production of the SU-30 MKI fighter jets. The deal worth over 3 billion dollars was signed at the SU manufacturing IAPO plant in Irkutsk, Siberia. The deal provided for the production of 140 SU - 30 MKI long-range multi role jets at the HAL over the next 17 years.

During the Russian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Ilya Klebanov’s visit to New Delhi in February 2001, both India and Russia signed a lucrative tank deal, which

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<sup>25</sup> See for details O.N. Mehrotra, in “Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership in the Current World Order” Note 17, p.80

<sup>26</sup> See for details Shri Prakash, “Indo-Russian Relations: Prospects & Problems in the Twenty First Century” in V.D. Chopra, ed, *Indo- Russian Relation: Prospects, Problems & Russia Today* (Kalpaz Publications, New Delhi, 2001), p.179.

<sup>27</sup> For details see Baidya Bikash Basu, “Future of India-Russia Defence Cooperation”, Note 26, p.77.

<sup>28</sup> See details The Hindu, 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2000.

Russia described as the deal of the century<sup>29</sup>. The 650 million dollars deal was signed by the visiting Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Mr. Ilya Klebanov and Indian Defence Minister George Fernandez. Agreements were signed over the T-90 MBT, which would cover their purchase and eventual manufacturing products including weapons systems. The first agreement stated that, India would purchase 124 of the 310 MBT and of the remaining 186 in semi knocked down form and 100 in knocked down conditions. The second agreement involved transfer of technology and manufacture of the weapon systems of these tanks. The missiles for the tanks were to be acquired in knocked down condition and assembled by Bharat Dynamics, a Ministry of Defence undertaking in India. The agreements also covered transfer of technology and further manufacture of these missiles in India. On June 4, 2001, the first session of the Inter-Governmental Commission for Military Technical Cooperation was held in Moscow. The Russian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Ilya Klebonov and the Indian Defence and External Affairs Ministers Mr.George Frenandes and Mr.Jaswant Singh co-chaired the IGCMTC. At the session, Mr.Jaswant Singh announced that India planned to increase defence purchases from Russia in the coming years and would seek joint development and production of new weapons. At the first IGCMTC session, Russia also invited India for the construction of a new fighter jet of the fifth generation that would replace the SU-30 MKI plane in the second decade of the 21st century. Russia, during the IGCMTC talks, also offered India the S-300 integrated advanced air defence systems, which in combinations with indigenous radars like Rajendra and the Akash missiles

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<sup>29</sup> See for details India and The World (Spectrum Books Publication, Pvt., Ltd., New Delhi, 2001), p.189.

will provide for wider defence system. In an interview to *Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozreniye*, General Andrei Nikolayev, Chairman of the Defence Committee of the State of Duma highlighted the fact that in the sphere of defence cooperation Russia was supplying India with the latest weaponry including the type that even the Russian army did not have but, Russia knew that by strengthening India's defence system Russia was reinforcing her own security<sup>30</sup>. India's External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh visited Russia in June 2001 to emphasize India's policy of upgrading its defence systems and to further strengthen defence cooperation with Russia. A protocol was signed between the two countries worth \$ 10 billion. Both countries agreed to jointly develop the 11-214 military transport aircraft, known as the multi-role transport aircraft. The first flights of this aircraft are scheduled for 2007-2008. On June 12, 2001 India and Russia jointly tested a developed supersonic cruise missile from the Chandipur test range in India. Further, after the successful co-production of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, India and Russia are planning to develop a fifth generation of fighter and multi-role transport aircraft. Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebenov visited New Delhi in October 2001, and declared that TU-22 class bombers would be provided to India on lease<sup>31</sup>. This class of bombers would be inducted into the Indian Navy for maritime reconnaissance. In 2001, both the countries signed a joint protocol to augment and define in detail, the long-term programme of defence cooperation till the year 2010. Russia will deliver \$ 10 billion worth of arms and other military hardware and technologies during this period. The protocol shifts

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<sup>30</sup> See for details Andrei Nikolayev as quoted by Sumit Chakravartty, in "Relevance of Putin Visit", *World Focus*, Vol.24, No.1, January 2003, P.12.

<sup>31</sup> For details see Ilya Klebenov as quoted by Biju Thomas, in "Putin's India Policy: Mutual Gains for Future", *India Quarterly*, Vol. LXIII, No 2, April-June, 2007, p.138.

the focus from straightforward sale of arms to joint development and production of military hardware. A separate working group on R&D has also been set up. By 12 June 2001 India had 3.5 billion worth contractual commitments with Russia. Russia expressed willingness to include India in the development of fifth generation fighter aircraft as part of a 10-year military technical cooperation.

The second meeting of Indo-Russian Joint Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation was held in New Delhi in February 2002. During this meeting further wide ranging discussions were held between the officials of the two countries regarding defence deals. As a result of these negotiations, three protocols concerning cooperation in defence technology and acquisition of military equipments were signed. These includes:

- ▶ The main protocol of the Inter-Governmental Commission.
- ▶ Protocol of the Working Group on Military Technical Cooperation.
- ▶ Protocol of the Working Group on Shipbuilding, Aviation and Land Systems.

Russia agreed to speed up supplies of advanced T-90 tanks to India. India and Russia redefined their military relationship by agreeing to produce fifth generation fighter aircraft and collaborate in the development of military technology in frontier areas. Russia would send a concept paper on the advanced fighter aircraft, and later a technical team from India would visit Moscow for further discussions on the project, in which both countries would have equal commitments. Bilateral military ties thus matured from a buyer- seller's relationship and transfer of technology to that of collaboration and R&D of military system. The two countries decided not only to sell these equipments to third world countries, but also agreed to discuss cooperation in the

area of satellite global surveillance system, which would help India in keeping a close watch on adversaries. India and Russia moved close to conclude negotiations on the much awaited sale of the partially gifted aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov and TU-22 long range bombers which can also deliver nuclear weapons. During the Russian President Putin's visit to India in December 2002, Russia agreed on accelerated supply of defence equipment and spare parts to India. There were also discussions on the Brahmos missile project and helicopters deals. It was also announced during the visit that the Indian Defence Minister George Fernandez would visit Moscow in January, 2003, to discuss new projects to expand military-technical cooperation. Russian Industry, Science and Technology Minister Ilya Klebonov told journalists in New Delhi that agreement had already been reached for joint production of 1000 seater military transport plane. Ilya Klebonov described Indo-Russian military technical cooperation as stable with a total turnover of 1.5 billion dollars per year<sup>32</sup>. As Victor Komardin, the Deputy Director of Rosoboronexport remarked in a seminar in New Delhi in 2002, the history of Russia forced the country to develop its military industry and science. The Russian defence sector provided armament and war equipment not only for the Russian Armed Forces but also for the armed forces of friendly states<sup>33</sup>.

The third meeting of the Joint Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation co-chaired by Russian Minister of Industry, Science and Technology, Ilya Klebonov and Defence Minister George Fernandez was held in Moscow in January 2003. The decisions at the IRIGC (Indo-Russian Inter Governmental Commission) meet were of substantive importance. Both India and Russia agreed that three contracts constituting

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<sup>32</sup> See for details Ilya Klebonov as quoted by Devendra Kaushik, Note 24, p.5

<sup>33</sup> For details see Victor Komardin as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, "India-Russia Defence Co-operation, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.30, No. 2, April-June 2006, p. 449.

a package deal would be acquired by India from Russia and the 44,500 ton aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, four TU-22 MB nuclear capable of range backfire, strategic bombers and two Akola class nuclear powered submarines would be clinched before the end of March 2003. In May 2003, Indo-Russia naval exercises took place for the first time. The joint exercise took place off the Western coast in the Arabian Sea and then in the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean. The idea was to strengthen cooperation, trust and mutual understanding between the two nations and to enhance stability in the Indian Ocean. India's National Security advisor Brajesh Mishra, and the Russian Atomic Energy Minister, Alexander Rumyantsev, discussed in November 2003 the issue of the Russian offer of supplying floating nuclear plants to India in order to bypass international restrictions on nuclear technology transfers. Apart from all these agreements, there were some other major agreements signed during the IRIGC on military-technical cooperation. First, it was decided to intensify laboratory-to-laboratory cooperation, which would support the joint development and production of projects chosen for pursuit, besides extending military cooperation beyond its present confines of a 'buyer-seller' relationship. Secondly, the possibility of exports to third world countries was also agreed to be explored on a case-by-case basis to cater to the strategic sensitivities of both countries. Thirdly, the areas of staff exercises were to be promoted. The Russian interests arose from the range of terrain available in India ranging from high altitude to desert to jungle areas, which would be instructive for the Russian military to familiarize themselves with for future operations. Fourthly, subscribing to training programmes for force officers in both the countries. Fifthly, it was decided to evolve a common strategy to combat terrorism in Afghanistan, which threatened both the countries. The Delhi Declaration had reaffirmed that neither

country would take any action which might threaten or impair the security of the other and that both the countries would be guided by these principles in their security and defence policies and military-technical cooperation with third countries. The then Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, also underlined that the wide-ranging defence cooperation between India and Russia transcended a buyer-seller relationship and included joint research development and production of high-tech weapons. He mentioned, as an instance, the state-of the-art BrahMos missile which was a product of joint research and development efforts<sup>34</sup>. New Delhi described the missile as an “outstanding example of Indo-Russian joint endeavour”. The former President, of India K.R. Narayanan, and former Prime Minister, A.B.Vajpayee, termed it as a symbol of defence cooperation between the two countries<sup>35</sup>. India and Russia were now embarking on the co-production of this missile system for its induction in the armed forces of both countries.

One of the long-hassled defence deal finally came to a settlement after India signed its biggest ever defence deal (\$1.5 billion or over Rs. 7000 crore) with Russia for the purchase of the aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov, in New Delhi on 20 January, 2004. Defence Ministers of both the countries, George Fernandez of India and Sergei Ivanov of Russia, rightly called the deal a ‘historic landmark’ in bilateral ties<sup>36</sup>. The Russian carrier was to replace India’s only aircraft carrier, INS Virat. Its likely induction in 2008 was to ensure that the navy does not lose its expertise in

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<sup>34</sup> See for details Atal Bihari Vajpayee as quoted by V.P. Dutt, in “Putin’s Russia and India: Overview”, in V.D. Chopra ed., *New Trends in Indo-Russian Relations*, (Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2003), p. 26.

<sup>35</sup> See for details K.R. Narayanan & Atal Bihari Vajpayee as quoted by V.D. Chopra, in “Indo-Russian Strategic Partnership Enters A New Phase”, Note 8, p. 256.

<sup>36</sup> For details see George Fernandez & Sergei Ivanov as quoted by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, in “Indo-Russian Relations: Prospects of Economic Cooperation”, in P.L. Dash & Andrei M. Nazarkin eds., *Indo-Russian Diplomatic Relations: Sixty Years of Enduring Legacy*, (Academic Excellence Publisher & Distributors, Delhi, 2008), p.249.

handling aircraft carriers. A Russian firm, Beriev, is currently building three A-50 AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control Systems) called A50Ehl. The surveillance aircraft will be the first of its kind to be built in Russia, and combines a variety of systems from Israel, India and Russia. A PTI dispatch from Moscow on January 18, 2004, quoted the Russian Defence Minister, Sergei Ivanov as saying; “we had never planned to monopolize the Indian arms market. Depending only on one source is bad for any armed forces, it leads to their degradation”. Ivanov said that Russia understands India’s desire to get the best available technology and welcomes it and is ready to compete by offering the best technology<sup>37</sup>. Referring to the Israeli Phalcon radar deal that would be fitted into IL-78 tanker aircraft, he added that Moscow was not averse to India’s ties with third parties while working on Indian defence orders. He also referred to the French and Israeli systems having been incorporated in Su-30 MKI multi role fighter aircraft designed and developed for India. Major points that have emerged on this count during the Russian President’s visits are:

- Russia and India will move from a “ buyer-seller” relationship to an expanded level of joint research and development and joint production of weapon systems’
- Joint investment in the BrahMos cruise missile will be enhanced for grater production.
- Both countries will explore joint production of fifth generation strike combat aircraft.
- Joint air-borne troops' exercise will be held.

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<sup>37</sup> See for details Sergei Ivanov as quoted by Ranjana Mishra, in “Military Ties: Where Bear Hugs The Elephant”, *World Focus*, Vol. XXIX, No. 8, August 2008, p.301.

- Intellectual property rights agreement in relation to defence production would be finalised within five months.
- Agreements on upgradation of existing Russian weapon systems in India were signed.
- Supply of Russian spares for India's future requirements were discussed and procedures streamlined.

The emphasis on joint research development and production of weapon systems is notable in many ways. For India the advantage lies in quantum jumps in weapons technology expertise and a greater self-reliance, lessening India's burden on defence R&D and the prospectus of joint international marketing like in the case of the BrahMos cruise missile.

The Indian and Russian troops held joint military exercises in October 2005. Undergoing familiarization at Agra, paratroopers from both countries moved to Rajasthan (India) and conducted a mock operation to destroy a terrorist camp. At the same time, the navies conducted joint exercises on the eastern seaboard. Some key Indian military and naval personnel underwent a two month course in Russia to transcend the language barrier. A joint naval exercise was also held in 2003. This was the first time that both wings of the armed forces simultaneously held mock war games. The two countries hoped to make the joint exercises a regular event on the lines of similar exercises with the Western countries. Deepak Sinha, heading the 50th Independent Para Brigade in India, said the training of airborne forces was being held in two parts. The first was carried out in Agra, while the second was to be carried out in the Mahajan field firing range in Rajasthan. Five warships from the Russian Pacific

Fleet, including a missile cruiser and two amphibious assault ships, took part in the 'Indra-2005' joint naval exercises which were more of anti terror in nature and had been organized within the framework of Indo-Russian anti-terror cooperation. The exercise was supposed to enhance the capacity of both the countries to counter maritime threats. It was a two-day exercise that ended on 19 October 2005. During his visit to Moscow in mid-November, 2005, Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee indicated the possibility of further renewal of the long-term military-technical programme with Russia after the expiry of the 10 year programme in 2010. Bilateral defence was one of the major components of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Moscow in December 2005. The two sides agreed to shift the main emphasis in their military-technical cooperation to joint development and manufacture of futuristic weapon systems. In his joint press conference with President Putin, Prime Minister Singh observed that the perspective goal of both the countries was to move towards collaborative projects involving design, development and production of the next generation of military products<sup>38</sup>. On 6th December 2005, both countries signed the much debated Intellectual Property Rights agreement, which opened the way for joint high tech projects on a large scale. As per the agreement the accord would apply to new deals only and not with retrospective effect. India agreed to give preference to Russian suppliers but on condition that they make deliveries within reasonable time and price. The multi-role transport aircraft and the 5th-generation fighter plane had been identified as two such projects. During the visit, both countries also updated their

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<sup>38</sup> See for details Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra, Note 36, p.250.

10-year programme on military-technical cooperation up to 2010 to take into account the new thrust towards joint production of new weapons<sup>39</sup>.

On 25-26 January 2007, Russian President Putin was the guest of honour at India's Republic Day celebrations and during this period the intergovernmental agreements were signed between India and Russia. It should be noted that the assistance of Russia to strengthening military might of the Indian Armed Forces has no orientation against any other country. It serves not only the purpose of Indian security, but also ensures regional and global security. This shows that integration of the Indian and Russian defence industries would be in line with the current shift from the buyer seller relationship to joint development and production of new weapon system. We have joint R&D projects with India in almost all types of military hardware, Mr. Komardin said, citing as examples the BrahMos cruise missile built last year and a medium-haul transport aircraft to be developed jointly on the lines of the Russian built II-214 plane.

Top defence factory managers of Russia have been visiting India to examine strategic partnership with India. "We take interest in the privatization of India's defence plants said Mr. Vladimir Korenkov, General Director of the Bazalt factory, Russia's leading manufacturer of unguided munitions. If Russia and India are strategic partners it would be logical to integrate our defence industries"<sup>40</sup>. Bazalt, which has been supplying air bombs and artillery shells to India, is now proposing joint developments of new-generations munitions, such as winged air bombs that enable the

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p.251.

<sup>40</sup> See for details Vladimir Korenkov as quoted by V.D.Chopra, Note 34, p. 130.

pilot to hit targets 6 km to 15 km away while staying out of range of enemy air defence. He held that “we are prepared to consider setting up a joint venture with an Indian entity and manufacture new munitions for our two countries as well as for exporting to third countries”. Participation in India’s defence sector and disinvestments programme can also help Russia face up to mounting competition from Western arms manufacturers. We propose to increase the share of high technologies in our defence exports to India, to move from licensed assembly of Russian made weapons to joint development and production and to promote factory-to-factory ties said Mr. Komardin. Experts said the Russian defence industry which is wholly state owned could invest both cash and technologies in the Indian defence sector. The Russian defence industry is capable of investing in India \$ 600 to \$700 million over the next three to four years, said Alexander Vaskin of the Indo-Russian security force. As for technologies the Russian contribution could be far more weighty if for example the two countries go for the joint development of a fifth-generation jet fighter or a fourth generation tank on the basis of the Russian T-95 MBI .This shows that Indo-Russian defence cooperation is not only expanding but has begun to take a multi-dimensional character. At the Sixth Meeting of the India - Russia Inter Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGCMTC) co-chaired by the Indian Defence Minister Shri A.K. Antony and the Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Russia Mr. Sergey Borisovich Ivanov in New Delhi on January 24, 2007, four agreements were signed boosting defense cooperation between India and Russia. This includes agreement on license production and technical documents for RD 33 series Aero Engines and protocol of intent for the joint development and production of multi-role Transport Aircraft. It was also agreed that the Sukhoi design

bureau will assist India in testing an air-to-ground version of it. The 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGCMTC) headed by the Defence Ministers of India and Russia was held on January 24, 2007. The Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov, chaired the commission meeting. The Commission in its deliberations covered areas like interaction between the two Armed Forces, Military Technical Cooperation, Supply of Defence Systems and Equipments up gradation, licensed and joint Production and Joint Development and Production of weaponry. The three services of Indian Armed Forces have used weaponry and equipments of the Russian origin like MiG and Sukhoi aircrafts, submarines and Marine Stealth Frigates by the Indian Navy, ammunition and tanks by the Indian Army. Of course, competitive market situation dictates these to change from time to time taking into consideration the most perspective trends in the development of Indo-Russian military and technological cooperation.

There is increasing awareness on both sides on willingness to incorporate latest achievements of other countries such as France and Israel, etc. and integrate these jointly with foreign firms. Su-30MK1 is an example of such cooperation, where in Sukhoi Designing Bureau worked closely with France's SNECMA and Russia's NPO Saturn over working out Sa M 146 engines. Integration of armament industries in the military technical cooperation and bringing diverse international skills together for capacity enhancement of the product will reduce the costs by way of sharing the investment in R&D. Both the countries are actively engaged in enhancing and developing inherent capabilities and potential of SU 30 MK1, Multi-role Combat Aircraft (MRCA). Indian research and development agencies like Electronics R&D

Establishment (LRDE) and Defence Avionic Research Establishment (DARE) have joined hands with Rosoboron Export and V.V. Tikhomirov Scientific Research Institute of Instrument Building (Tikhomirov NIIP) along with India-Russia Venture BraMos Aerospace. It is expected that by 2010 the first SU30MK1 will roll out from India's Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) production facility at Nashik. It will be equipped with new active phased-array airborne radar called the IRBIS, being jointly produced at a cost of \$ 160 million. By 2007 the SU30MK1 would be capable to carry one 2.5 tonnes BraMos missile along with other deadly ordinance. With further strengthening of aircraft wings of the MRCA it should be able to carry up to three BraMos missiles.

On Aug 18, 2008, an India-Russia working group met in New Delhi, to discuss key military issues like the licensed production in India of the T-90 main battle tank and joint production of a fifth generation fighter aircraft. Several issues, including the transfer of technology of the T-90 tanks were discussed during the two-day meeting and some understanding was arrived at, a defence official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The meeting of the India-Russia Inter Governmental Commission's working group on ship building, aviation and land systems was its eighth. Additional Secretary (Indian Defence Production) Ajay Acharya chaired the meeting, which was attended by his Russian counterpart, Igor Karavaev of the department of defence industries. Delays in the manufacturing of the indigenous Arjun main battle tank and Pakistan's decision to purchase the T-80 from Ukraine prompted India to order 310 T-90s in 2001. Of these, 186 were assembled from kits at the Heavy Vehicles Factory at Avadi, near Chennai. An agreement was also signed for the licensed production of another 1,000 T-90s. This, however, was yet to commence due

to Russia's reluctance to transfer technology, which prompted India to purchase another 300 tanks from Russia. Joint production of fifth generation fighter aircraft and licensed manufacturing of Sukhoi-30 MKI by HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.) was also be discussed, the official added. India and Russia signed an agreement in 2000, on the joint development and production of the jet. India and Russia had signed an agreement for the transfer of technology and licensed production of 140 SU-30 MKI fighter aircraft, engines and airborne equipment by HAL. The agreement also provided for setting up repair and overhaul facilities.

India and Russia agreed to extend the term of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission for Military-Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC) for another ten years till 2020, leading to a further strengthening of ties between both countries. Russia's Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov met his Indian counterpart A.K Antony for one-to-one talks and later co-presided over a session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission for Military-Technical Cooperation. Antony termed the meeting of the IRIGC-MTC as very successful, and was hopeful of it having a positive outcome. India attaches great importance to relations with Russia. Moscow has been New Delhi's old and trusted friend and both the countries want to strengthen the relations, he said. We want to expand the relations to new areas as the inter-governmental panels term expires in 2010 and in principal we decided to extend the commissions term for the next 10 years till 2020, Antony added. The Russian Defence Minister said, the term of IRIGC-MTC expires in 2010 and that is why a delegation came to draft a new program after 2010 in which particular attention will be on scientific research and joint production. The participants discussed the implementation of a joint program for military-technical cooperation up to 2010, and

preparations for its further extension. The Russian party has introduced a new draft agreement for the next 10 years, Serdyukov said. Our strategic partnership has to be dynamically developed and the issues of joint exercises and joint development have been taken up successfully, the Russian Defence Minister added. To avoid delay in decision-making and to speed up the implementation of various projects, Antony said both sides agreed to establish a joint working group at the Defence Secretary level to coordinate the work of the intergovernmental commission. Today, we took a decision to have an apex body at the highest level with Indian Defence Secretary and his Russian counterpart meeting at least once in six months so that all the pending issues are sorted out urgently, he said. Antony emphasized that Indo-Russian relationship has now reached from buyer-seller level to the level of co producer in the field of design, development and scientific research. Indo- Russian inter-governmental commission sessions are held annually and alternate between New Delhi and Moscow. The previous meeting took place in the Russian capital in October 2007. The participants discussed proposals related to about 200 joint projects, including the modernisation of the Vikramaditya aircraft carrier (formerly the Admiral Gorshkov) for the Navy, the transfer of technology (ToT) for the licensed assembly of T-90 tanks in India, the production of BrahMos missiles and the purchase of Smerch MLRS by India. The meeting also discussed joint production, joint development and production of systems and platforms, interaction between the two armed forces and military technical cooperation. (ANI)

On December 3, 2007 in New Delhi, India and Russia took a significant step to boost Defence Cooperation at their first meeting of the India-Russia High Level Monitoring Committee (HLMC). The two-day meeting, co-chaired by the Indian

Defence Secretary Vijay Singh and Mikhail Dmitriev, Director, FSMTC from the Russian side, discussed issues related to the ongoing projects such as Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft, Multi-role Transport Aircraft, T-90 tanks, AWACS, SU-30MKI upgrade, aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov and Medium Lift Helicopters. Cooperation between the defence forces of the two countries was also discussed. This new forum was established during the last meeting of the India Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC) held in New Delhi on September 29, 2008 under the joint Chairmanship of the Defence Ministers of both countries. This forum was established to not only monitor implementation of ongoing Military Technical Cooperation (MTC) activities, but also identify new activities for enhancing defence cooperation by way of joint Research, Development and production of military hardware, including Transfer of Technology and cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries. Earlier, the Indian Cabinet Committee on Security had finalised the additional cost for repair and refit of aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya (formerly Admiral Gorshkov). Negotiations have been on between India and Russia over the past year following the latter's demand for two billion dollars over and above the 1.5 billion dollars that New Delhi paid in 2004 for purchasing the warship. The CCS also approved the Ministry's proposal to acquire 80 MI-17 helicopters for Indian Air Force at the earliest. (ANI)

During the Soviet period, Indo-Soviet relations especially defence co-operation was high on the agenda. As per the Indian expectations, Russia extended its valuable military co-operation to India, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Foreign policy experts in both the countries, while analyzing Indo-Russian relations, gave special attention to military co-operation. Russian co-operation with India in the sphere of

defence is very much important, due to the presence of USA in South Asian affairs. As Pakistan is under the influence of the West, Russian co-operation with India created a balance of power situation in the Indian sub-continent. US wanted its presence felt in South Asia by providing diplomatic and military support to Pakistan. So, the Indian leaders have proved themselves wise by joining hands with Russia on defence issues. By providing military co-operation to India, Russia made its presence felt in South Asia, i.e. developed friendship with a large country like India, Secondly, it has been able to put a check on growing Chinese influence in South Asia, as passive axis of US-China- Pakistan has made South Asia one of the hot points in world politics. Russian military co-operation with India served and met the necessities of Russia too. US forces almost from all sides surround Russia. US military bases in Indian Ocean, Afghanistan, South Korea and Japan may be treated as a security threat for Russia. So, keeping a sound military co-operation with India had become indispensable for Russia. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the 'super power' status of Russia has faded. So, by helping India, Russia wanted to continue the past glory of 'super power' status and keep its importance in world politics intact. General Andrei, Chairman of the Defence Committee of the State of Duma said that by strengthening India's defence systems, Russia was reinforcing her own security. Joining hands with Russia has become very much necessary for India too. Security threats from Pakistan, not so friendly Bangladesh regime and skeptical role of China has compelled India to look towards Russia. Wars with China in 1962, with Pakistan in 1965 and 1971 and Kargil war with Pakistan in 1999 compelled India to take military assistance from Russia. Last but not the least, Indo-Russian military co-operation has proved to be a movement towards right direction for both the countries. Defence ties have

strengthened the position of both the countries in Asia as well as in world politics. It may be said that by providing military co-operation to each other, both the countries are making themselves secure in years to come, and it is also important to note that both India and Russia have stated that their military co-operation is not directed against any third country.

For India, Russia offers a number of advantages over other suppliers though there are some disadvantages as well. Russian hardware is of good quality; it is hardy and durable (operable in hot and cold theatres of operation) and is price competitive. Russian firms and officials are familiar with the Indian arms market, the defence bureaucracy, and the procurement process. Russia has proven itself (over several decades) to be a reliable long-term arms supplier and one that does not attach strings to weapons sales. In addition to this type of 'cultural' familiarity, there is a technical familiarity with Russian equipment within the Indian armed forces and Indian companies. The services in India understand Russian technology and engineering. They have grown accustomed to it and have little difficulty in operating it or modifying it to suit their own needs. Russian equipment can also be more easily integrated with existing weapons systems. Lastly, Russia has proven far more willing to collaborate with India on joint ventures and has been more generous in terms of technology transfers and licensing agreements. Co-operation with Russia has made a vitally important contribution to the development of Indian defence potential. It has given India access to sophisticated weapons and advanced technologies at a time when others were not willing. The defence cooperation reflected the convergence of their larger geopolitical interests. In the post-Soviet difficult transition period, arms purchases by India have helped the Russian MIC to tide over the crisis and survive.

Joint development and production of new weapon systems may emerge as a very promising area of continued Indo-Russian cooperation. It may provide continuity and stability to existing ties. Advanced avionics and electronic systems developed by Western countries and Israel may also be incorporated as is already being done.

The hard reality of India-Russia relations is something more than strategic calculus. It is, in fact, based on strong, lasting relationship, spanning over decades and aimed at strengthening their respective economies through sale and purchase of arms and transfer of technology. Success with the BrahMos would provide both countries the leverage to move toward achieving what they were looking for when they initiated this cooperation nearly a decade ago. For India, that is the creation of a modern defense industrial sector capable of producing high-tech weapons both for the country's own armed forces and for export abroad. For Russia, it is the establishment of a partnership capable of providing a core of the country's still sophisticated, yet cash-poor defense producers with the financial wherewithal needed to remain players in the global arms game. And finally, owing to the past legacy and ongoing projects, Russia will remain, at least for the foreseeable future, a major defence partner of India. However, in view of the increased competition for the Indian defence market and the technological demands of India's defence sector, joint development and production of new weapon systems could become crucial for sustaining Indo-Russian cooperation in the coming years. It is very necessary for enhancing mutual gains in this vital sector should both countries want to sustain a robust relationship in the new global environment. There are some problems and differences, but no matter how important they may seem at a certain time, they are all eventually resolved and should not influence cooperation backed by long standing friendship.

## Chapter : V

### **Economic Dimensions of Indo -Russian Relations (1991-2008)**

Economic relations are as important as political relations and this is being increasingly realized in the case of Indo-Russian bilateral relations. Given a long history of cordial relations in various aspects, the two countries have come to realize the need to boost economic partnership in terms of bilateral trade and commerce. The political relations being in a good shape as reflected in bilateral agreements and declarations such as on terrorism, strategic relation, and on international order, the imperatives is strongly felt towards the economic content of the strategic partnership. Former Indian Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, had clearly stated in his press conference in September, 1991, that India's foreign policy from now on will have a larger component of economic and cultural aspects. He maintained that the Ministry of External Affairs has to prepare itself for this reorientation since there was a need to concentrate more on international economic equations. From the diplomatic trends noticeable in India during the last one year or so it appears that the main focus of our diplomacy in the coming years will be more on economics than political matters, he said<sup>1</sup>.

Despite having solid economic and trade relations in the past, a large part of the 1990's constituted a period of difficult adjustments for Indian as well as Russian business. Bilateral trade between India and Russia was severely affected due to the

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<sup>1</sup> See for details P.V. Narasimha Rao as quoted by Manorama Kohli, in "Disintegration of the Soviet Union: Implications for India", *India Quarterly*, Vol. XLIX, No.3, July-September, 1993, p.93.

disintegration of the Soviet Union. The break-up of the USSR in 1991 and India's economic liberalization coincided. This resulted in a drastic reduction in bilateral trade and economic cooperation. At present, the economies are resurging and at the same time diversifying. Economic transformation in Russia from a centrally planned economy to a market economy in 1991 coincided with the ushering in policies of economic liberalization in India<sup>2</sup>. These developments changed the nature and character of foreign economic relations in both the countries. Besides, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the forces of globalization too affected bilateral economic relations. It can be mentioned here that both India and Russia launched the policies of liberalization and market reforms in 1991. Both were facing, as Russian President Boris Yeltsin argued, mostly the same problems and for the solutions of these problems the Russian leaders suggested, "we are to cope with the enormous economic and social tasks and cooperation between India and Russia in this area could prove useful and important"<sup>3</sup>. However, with the developments such as Rupee-Rouble crisis, cryogenic rocket controversy and Russia's attitude on Kashmir, economic relations were not smooth between the two countries. However, slowly the situation changed in favor of the old allies.

One of the reasons for the decline in Indo-Russian trade was that the bulk of the trade was being contributed by other republics of the USSR. Secondly, during the days of Soviet Union, public sector was playing an important role in letting up industrial units and it found economic cooperation with the Soviet Union more beneficial. The imports were paid for either in rupee or by exporting a part of the

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<sup>2</sup> See for details Gulshan Sachdeva, "Reviving Economic Interests", *Frontline*, Vol.17, Issue 21, October14-27, 2000, p.2.

<sup>3</sup> For details see Boris Yeltsin as quoted by Debidatta Aurobindo Mahapatra, in "Indo-Russian Relations: Prospects of Economic Cooperation", in P.L. Dash & Andrei M. Nazarkin, eds., *Indo-Russian Diplomatic Relations: Sixty Years of Enduring Legacy*, (Academic Excellence Publishers, Delhi, 2008), p.239.

output of units setup with Soviet collaboration. Liberalization, privatization and globalization are the other important developments, which have been instrumental for both the countries to look towards West and European Union<sup>4</sup>.

The initial years of bilateral relations between the two countries in the aftermath of the Soviet disintegration was not only uncertain but also marked by a high degree of suspicion. This period of transition from a socialist pattern of society to a market economy was marked by turbulence in every aspect of Russian society, polity, economy and culture and the leadership gave up the traditional approach towards its old allies, including India. In the post disintegration period, the focus was on democracy, market reforms and pluralism for which the Russian leaders thought, Western aid was essential. Nevertheless, the sudden shift in the priority areas proved costly for Russia. Gulf crisis, Yugoslavia crisis and cryogenic rocket controversy etc. provided ample proofs of Russia's weakness. It was thus on expected lines that its relations with India got affected in 1991-1992. Indo-Russian economic cooperation has not been commensurate with their mutual potentials. Prof. Felix Yurlov's agrees with the opinion of several others that the first ten years of economic relations were a lost decade and a decade of lost opportunities<sup>5</sup>. He says Russia in the mid 1990s started changing its foreign policy and turning its attention towards East and India in particular. He held that, "time was lost in spite of all advantages which we had in our relations with India, such as cooperation in different fields like trade and economic field, scientific, military, and cultural field. So we have lost quite a lot in those five

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<sup>4</sup> See for details R.K. Wadhwa, in "Economic Cooperation Between India & Russia", in V.D. Chopra ed., *Global Significance of Indo-Russian Strategic Relationship*, (Kalpaz Publication, Delhi, 2005), p.204.

<sup>5</sup> See for details Prof. Felix Yurlov as quoted by Debidatta Aurobindo Mahapatra, Note 3, p.240

years”<sup>6</sup>. However the beginning of the twenty first century witnessed some remarkable developments in bilateral economic cooperation between the two countries.

Prospects of India-Russia economic ties are quite good. The present level of trade between the two countries is far below the potentials. Firstly, both India and Russia are larger countries with expanding economies. Gross Domestic Products (GDP) growth in both the countries has been in the range of 6-8 percent during the last few years and this growth has been sustained. Secondly, at present both Russia and India have huge hared currency reserves of \$ 270 billion and \$ 190 billion respectively, which indicate vast market opportunities and scope for the development of a wide range of economic sectors without many resource constraints. Thirdly, there is sustained goodwill and interest between the two countries to promote sincere economic ties. This is evident from various initiatives taken by the leaders of both the countries in terms of holding summit meetings at regular intervals, setting up of Joint Study Group to examine the feasibility of a comprehensive economic cooperation agreement and arranging exhibitions from time to time in both the countries. Presumably for these reason India and Russia have set trade turnover target of \$ 10 billion by 2010. But considering the fact that the present level of trade turnover is about \$ 2 billion, a rise of about 5 times appears to be rather ambitious. Fourthly, according to some experts in the pharmaceutical sector, there are good prospects for Russian chemical companies to supply chemicals and raw materials to India in bulk during its manufacture, apart from producing medicines to be supplied to the world market. Fifthly there is good scope for promoting cooperation in hi-technology areas such as information, biotechnology etc. Sixthly, efforts have already been made to establish friendship and cooperation between regions and cities in Russia and India

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.241

such as Gujrat and Astrakhan, Karnataka, and Samara region, Andhra Pradesh and Ttatarstan, Mumbai and St Petterburg region and so on. This form of cooperation has to go beyond the formal exchange of social and political visits and should result in business interaction and exchange of information and contrast and proposals in terms of trade and economic joint ventures. In connection with promoting India-Russia trade it is stated by Nand Khemka of the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), New Delhi in February 2007, that one of the prime needs for both the countries is to enhance economic cooperation and correct the balance between the traders as well as to promote engagement in different value chains.

In January 1992, a delegation of top Indian officials headed by Indian Foreign Secretary J.N. Dixit visited Moscow. During the visit a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on trade and supplies of defence and power generation equipment<sup>7</sup>. The Indian side was particularly interested in continuation of rupee trade in case of defence supplies, power, local and steel sectors as well as oil imports from Russia. The first rupee payment trade protocol between India and Russia was signed on 22 February 1992. On 4<sup>th</sup> May 1992, the Russian Secretary of state Germany Burbulis visited New Delhi. During the visit the two countries signed a five-year trade and economic cooperation agreement. They decided to accord the Most Favored Nation (MFN) treatment to each other<sup>8</sup>. The two countries also decided to establish an Inter Governmental Commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation. Russia renewed the agreements dealing with export oil, newsprint and military equipments. India also opened an Rs.2.5 billion technical credit to Russia for

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<sup>7</sup> See for details Jyotsna Bakshi, "India-Russia Cooperation in Economy, Science and Technology", in Shams-Ud-Din, ed., *India and Russia towards Strategic Partnership*, (Lancer's Books, New Delhi, 2001), p.243.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

exporting tea, coffee, tobacco and spices. An attempt was made to revive the mechanism of 'ordered' trade in a modified form under the Indo-Russian Trade and Economic Agreement signed in May 1992.

In 1993 an agreement was signed to terminate the rupee trade arrangements and it mandated all bilateral trade transactions to be conducted on hard currency basis. The issue of repayment of civilian and military loans taken by India also came up. After prolonged negotiations, the rouble credit was denominated in rupees and repayment schedule was drawn up. It was agreed that India will pay about 3000 crores annually to Russia for 12 years from 1994 and that Russia would use the rupees to buy Indian goods. However, during Russian President Yeltsin's visit to India in January 1993, it was decided that instead of being governed by inter governmental protocols; Indo-Russian trade should be conducted as per normal international practice<sup>9</sup>. Two broad observations can be made about the course of India-Russia economic cooperation so far:

1. Numerous agreements have been signed during summit along with high level meetings to boost all round economic cooperation and trade and hopes have been expressed by the political leaders of the two sides that trade and economic ties between them would significantly expand in keeping with the size and possibilities of the two countries as well as the warm friendly political relations and broad compatibility of their geographical interests. In fact before President Putin visited India in October 2000 India and Russia were already signatories to nearly 65 agreements of various kinds. Some new and some old Indo-Soviet agreements that were updated.

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<sup>9</sup> For details see V.D. Chopra, "Russia Emerging as a World Economic Power and Indo-Russian Economic Cooperation, Note 4, p.190.

2. However in reality the trade and economic ties have not really expanded due to various factors.

High level visits and exchange of views provided several opportunities wherein the two sides signed agreements to further boost trade and economic ties. During Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao's visit to Moscow in June-July 1994, the two countries signed agreements to set up a number of joint ventures. It was decided to make use of the huge crores of rupee fund meant for the repayment of Soviet debt. It was decided that India would participate in the modernization of Novorossisk port in Russia and build more houses there in return for priority berthing facilities in the busy port. It also decided to set a joint bank of Russia, with the State Bank of India and Rosxim Bank of Russia. The absence of Indian Bank of Russia was a major impediment for increasing trade. Thus an attempt was made to address the situation. However, owing to the political and economic uncertainties and crisis in Russia during that time, the conditions were not particularly conducive for any spectacular growth in trade and economic transactions. The Moscow Declaration of 1994 covered, among other things a few important aspects relating to economic cooperation between India and Russia stepping up India's export to Russia to \$ 800 million, and agreements to set up research centres with Indo-Russian equity participation for promoting science and technology, mutual investment protection pact for safeguarding economic interests of both countries. In 1994 Indo-Russian Inter Governmental Commission (IGC) was established for promoting bilateral cooperation in very wide range of areas<sup>10</sup>. In August 1994 India and Russia signed a new protocol which identified new areas of collaboration, including the aluminium, zinc and copper industries. Bilateral trade in iron and steel was to be increased and the two countries

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<sup>10</sup> See for details Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 7, p. 249.

decided to cooperate in carrying out research and development in ferrous metallurgy. In December 1994, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin visited India. During the visit the two sides signed an agreement on mutual protection of investment, long term purchase by Russia of certain commodities in India, merchant shipping, broadening the sphere of Indo-Russian Joint Commission. The joint statement issued at the time said that the two countries would continue discussions for concluding agreements on avoiding double taxation and mutual legal assistance, the sides also affirmed their interests in continuation and development of mutually beneficial cooperation in sectors like power, oil coal, ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy. It was also decided to utilize part of the rupee payment of rouble debt by New Delhi for the implementation of agreed projects in India<sup>11</sup>.

Hopeful progress was made by the two sides regarding the possibility of the expansion of bilateral trade. In the beginning of July 1995 a meeting of Indo-Russian Joint Commission was held in New Delhi. The Russian delegation was led by the Deputy Prime Minister Yuii Yarov. The Indian delegation was led by External Affairs Minister Mr. Pranab Mukherjee. It was envisaged by the sides that their mutual trade would reach Rs.4000 crore mark from Rs. 2800 crore in 1993 and would rise to Rs. 5000 crore in 1995. In a meeting of the Indo-Russian Joint Commission held in October 1995, both sides expressed satisfaction over the steadily rising volume of trade between the two countries.

However at the political level the two countries continued to pronounce their eagerness to expand economic ties, remove the obstacles in the way and facilitate greater economic interactions. The Russian Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Oleg Darydov was reported to have chalked out a plan in January 1996 for boosting

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Russian industrial equipments to India. The fact was that for both the countries each other's market conditions had completely changed from what they were in the Soviet period. Moreover in the changed condition it became imperative to carry on aggressive market terminus in order to chalk out a share in each other's market. Both the Indian exports as well as their Russian counterparts seemed to lack an aptitude for it. Thus the Russian ambassador to India, Albert Scherryenem, said on August 9, 1996 that in Moscow a special Russian-Indian business council was formed<sup>12</sup>. Speaking at a meeting organized by the Federation of Indian export organization, the Russian trade commissioner E.A Isayer said on 16th September 1996, that the Indian companies should pursue the Russian market more aggressively as Israeli, American, German and French companies were doing with a view to establishing a strong hold there<sup>13</sup>.

The prospect of widening and deepening Indo-Russian ties have brightened after the conclusion of the fourth meeting of the Indo-Russian Working Group on trade and economic cooperation in New Delhi on 12 December 1997. In substance, while working out the long term bilateral trading arrangements, India will export items like tea, tobacco and pharmaceuticals, while Russia will export newsprint and fertilisers. Engineering and electronic goods as well as information technology products and computer software also have the potential to enhance Indo-Russian trade. The Indo-Russian trade in iron and steel is on the rise and the two countries are carrying out research in ferrous metallurgy. In the long run, Indian organizations like minerals and metals trading corporation and projects and equipment corporations will interact with their Russian counterparts to boost joint cooperation, particularly in aluminium, zinc and copper industries. Finally as the subsidiaries of Indian banks,

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<sup>12</sup> See for details Albert Scherryenem as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 7, p.250.

<sup>13</sup> For details see E.A Isayer as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 7, p.250.

including Canara bank, Central bank, and State Bank of India, commence their operation in Russia, the banking links between the two countries will be strengthened<sup>14</sup>. Indeed, the idea of Rosexim bank of Russia to set up a joint bank is a step in this direction.

It is reckoned that there are over 200 Indian joint ventures in Russia mainly engaged in trading activity. In 1998 Indian investment expenditure in Russia was reported to be about \$2 million to \$3 million mostly in trading and representation activities, while Russian investment in India amounted to about \$2.1 million, combined with technology transfer. In 1998 some Indian joint ventures were setup in Russia. They were rice packing unit (Lucky exports), a tea packing unit (Amter) and a joint venture in construction, and material distribution/sales centers. In January 1998, this mechanism was replaced with a weekly auction of rupee debt funds conducted by the Vnesheconom Bank (Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs). The 5<sup>th</sup> session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission took place in Moscow on 24 November 1998 and was headed on the Indian side by Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha. The issue of increasing bilateral trade was discussed. India reiterated its proposal to invest into projects in India from the debt repayment funds. Indian side stressed the need for long term trading arrangements for export from India of such traditional items such as tea, tobacco and pharmaceuticals including medical equipment, as well as export from Russia of fertilisers, newsprint and metal products. Mr. Sinha added that India would consider reducing the value addition norms of exporters of high tech items from India to Russia under the debt repayment route. He said that transparent, predictable and effective utilization of rupee repayment funds for

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<sup>14</sup> See for details Rajen Harshe, "India and Russia in A Changing World", in Rajen Harshe & K.M. Seethi, eds., *Engaging With The World Critical Reflections on India's Foreign Policy*, (Orient Longman Publisher, New Delhi, 2005), p.150.

import of quality products from India, both traditional and non-traditional, will help in increasing the bilateral trade<sup>15</sup>. The Economic Commission decided to give greater emphasis on tie ups in the area of energy, including exploration of oil and gas. The two sides also decided to give a greater thrust to joint forays in the steel and coal sector. The joint exploration of oil and gas in Russia's far flung but resources rich regions such as Sakhalin and Tatarstan was pushed high on the agenda. ONGC Videsh Limited an overseas operating arm of ONGC, India, is involved in such explorations in Russia, while Russian companies are interested in producing oil in India. In December 1998 Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov visited India. During his visit the agreements signed included joint documents on development in the field of trade, economic, industrial, financial and scientific and technological areas, agreements on cooperation in the field of communications, air transport etc. In view of the unprecedented economic crisis and almost 70 percent devaluation of the rouble, Russia showed keenness during Prime Minister Primakov's visit to utilize part of the debt which India owed to Russia to be diverted to meet the food and essential commodity shortages in Russia.

Both the countries have expressed satisfaction as a result of the recent positive trends in bilateral trade, with India's export to Russia having recorded a growth of over 25 percent during April-September 1999 over the performance in the same period in 1998. The total Indo-Russian trade turnover during 1998-1999 was Rs. 5259.2 crore. During the first six months of the financial year 1999-2000, the turnover reached Rs. 3186.3 crore and therefore, the bilateral trade turnover for the whole year was higher compared to the previous years.

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<sup>15</sup> See for details Yashwant Sinha as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 7, p.251.

During his visit to India in October 2000, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed strategic partnership agreement with India. Broadly this agreement means enhanced cooperation in the political, economic, defence and cultural fields. A full section of the agreement deals with trade and economic issues. Both the countries agreed to strengthen close cooperation with a view to expand trade and economic relations<sup>16</sup>. The agreement talks of “deepening and diversifying cooperation in sectors such as metallurgy, fuel and energy, information technology, banking and finance, communications and transport, including merchant shipping and civil aviation. To promote bilateral trade it also talks of further development of cooperation in banking and finance and improving credit and insurance facilities. There was also mention of simplifying rules and procedures for travel by entrepreneurs and businessmen of both countries. It was also agreed to jointly explore the possibilities of regional trading arrangements with third countries. It was agreed that both the countries would enhance cooperation and coordination in international trade, economic and financial bodies. This may be useful in formulating common positions and responses to emerging global economic issues. In fact it was also believed that there was a great scope for learning from each other in the approach of economic policy making. Experiences of both the countries with regard to privatization and liberalization of trade etc could be understood better through regular consultations. A renewed desire was expressed by both the sides for intensive commercial and economic links. From 10th to 12th September 2000, a delegation of the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) visited Moscow with a view to imparting impetus to Indo-Russian economic and commercial relations. The delegation represented a wide spectrum of the Indian industry including

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<sup>16</sup> See for details Gulshan Sachdeva, “Rejuvenating India-Russia Trade & Economic Linkages”, *World Focus*, Vol.24, No.1, January, 2003, p.9

IT, financial services, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, automobiles and auto components and civil aviation. It was mentioned that CII would shortly be opening its representative office in Moscow. The then Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Mr. Ilya Klebanov called upon CII to develop an action plan within the next two months, identifying core sectors and concrete opportunities for cooperation between the Indian and Russian business entities<sup>17</sup>. Addressing a meeting of Indian businessmen and entrepreneurs in Mumbai on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2000, Russian President Vladimir Putin stressed that “one of the main tasks is to bolster economic and trade cooperation, which now does not correspond to the potential of our countries”. During this period a multimillion contract on the joint exploration of gas fields in the Bay of Bengal was signed between the Russian gas giant Gazprom and the Gas Authority of India Ltd (GAIL)<sup>18</sup>. In October 2000, an Umbrella Agreement was signed between India and the Russian Federation on the principles of cooperation between the Governments of the States and Union Territories of the Republic of India and the Bodies of Executive Authority of the Constituent Entities of the Russian Federation<sup>19</sup>. Under this umbrella document, cooperation agreements were signed between Astrakhan and Gujarat (2001), Karnataka and Samara (2002), Andhra Pradesh and Tatarstan (2003) and the cities of St Petersburg and Mumbai (2004). Contacts on the institutional level in all fields of mutual interest and trade and economic cooperation were actively encouraged in this scheme of regional partnership, in particular through exchange visits. CII could now look into organizing seminars focused on highlighting business opportunities in various Russian regions.

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<sup>17</sup> See for details Ilya Klebanov as quoted by Jyotsna Bakshi, Note 7, p. 253.

<sup>18</sup> See for details Vladimir Putin as quoted by Krishan Gopal, in “India And Russia : The Ambit of Strategic Partnership”, Note 3, p.84.

<sup>19</sup> For details see Guralpal Singh, “CII: Cooperation Vision”, *New Theme: On Russian-Indian Affairs*, Vol. VII, Issue No.5, September-October, 2006, p.19.

During the visit of Indian Petroleum Minister Ram Naik to Moscow in February 2001, the Indian Oil Company, ONGC Videsh Ltd. and the Russian Rosneft signed an agreement on joint exploration of hydrocarbon resources in the Russian Far-Eastern island of Sakhalin. In 2001 during Indian Prime Minister A.B.Vajpayee's visit to Moscow another 16 documents were signed including Moscow Declaration on international terrorism, line of credit agreement between EXIM bank of India and Vnesheconom bank of Russia, and MoU between Confederation of Indian Industry and Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs for opening representative offices in Moscow and Delhi. As such, five Indian public sector undertakings are presently active in Russia. These are State Bank of India, Canara Bank, India Trade Promotion Organization, Tea Board of India and Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC). The most important in all these is ONGC investment in Russia. Under an agreement signed on February 10, 2001 between Rosneft-Sakhalin and Sakhalinmorneftegaz-Shelf, subsidiary of the oil and Natural Gas Corporation acquired a combined 20 percent interest in the Sakhalin-1 projects from Rosneft-S. ONGC Videsh's initial investment in the Sakhalin-1 project was expected to be about US \$ 1.7 billion. In addition, the then Indian Prime Minister proposed opportunities for Russian companies in infrastructure projects in urban and rural areas of India<sup>20</sup>.

During the visit of Russian President Putin to India in December 2002, both sides signed a Joint Declaration on strengthening and developing economic, scientific and technological cooperation<sup>21</sup>. A document on economic cooperation between the Indian State of Karnataka and Samara region of Russia and another document on telecommunication were signed during the visit. It was agreed in the document that

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<sup>20</sup> See for details Anand P. Mavalankar, in "The Changing Matrix of Indo-Russian Cooperation", Note 3, p.500.

<sup>21</sup> For details see Debidatta Aurobindo Mahapatra, Note 3, p. 241.

both the countries will workout broad concepts and roadmaps for strengthening and enhancing bilateral economic relations. It was also agreed that particular attention would be devoted to energy sector. Cooperation in this sector could also be extended to other areas including the Caspian Sea.

During the period from 1993-2003 almost 80% of Indian exports were financed through debt repayment channel. Though these arrangements facilitated Indian exports to Russia, in the process it opened the window for corruption, reduced the competitiveness of Indian goods in Russian market and spoiled the reputation of Indian commodities. The end of the arrangements for Indian supplies through debt repayment channel was a blow to Indian exports to Russia. The end of the arrangements might not have delivered a mortal blow to Indian exports as expected, but it did seriously jeopardize India's trade with Russia. A distinguishing feature of the bilateral trade during this period had been that the balance of trade between the two countries had always been in favour of Russia since the Soviet Union collapse. The balance of trade between the two countries was more than \$ 1.3 billion in the year 2005 and was in favour of Russia. If one includes defence purchases in the trade, the balance is always in favor of the largest trading partner, and former USSR was India's third largest trading partner in the world. The share of Russia in India's foreign trade was 9 % during the Soviet period, which had fallen to barely 1.5 % during 2005. Russia's share in Indian imports constitutes 1.1. %, while it constitutes 2 % in Indian exports.

According to Russia's State Customers Committee, trade with India for January- December, 2003 amounted to \$ 3.3.billion, with Russian exports estimated at \$ 2.7 billion and imports from India at \$ 0.6 billion. The last quarter of 2003 witnessed some positive developments in economic relations between the two countries. The

Confederation of Indian Industry opened its office at the Russian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Russia in October 2003 to facilitate the process of economic cooperation<sup>22</sup>. During the visit of Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee to Moscow in November 2003, 85 Indian businessmen accompanied him to study the prospects of investments and joint collaborations with Russian companies.

During the tenth session of the committee in New Delhi in November 2004, the Premier of the Russian Federation Alexander Zhukov announced the major directions of trade and cooperation. Among the basic commodities of the Russian export black and non-ferrous metals, chemicals and synthetic rubber were on the rise. Creation and development of the international transport corridor “South- North” from Europe to India, South and Southeast Asia was marked as a significant part of mutual cooperation<sup>23</sup>. Nuclear power engineering, new information and communication technologies, medical research and space exploration were named among the leading spheres of high tech partnership. Contacts between commercial banks and financial institutions were to be expanded. A commercial bank promoted by State Bank of India and Canara Bank commenced its operation in Moscow in 2004. More Russian Banks thereby opened their representative offices in India. EXIM bank extended two separate lines of credit worth US \$ 10 million and 25 million to two Russian banks. An additional line of credit to a third bank was also negotiated. The EXGC signed a Cooperative Agreement with Vneshtorg bank. In 2004 the Russian President Vladimir Putin sent a message to the Indian Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh wherein he underlined that “I am confident that the policy of strengthening strategic partnership will continue to provide a solid basis for multifaceted Russian-Indian cooperation in

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> See for details Allister Maunk, “Economic Cooperation Between Russia and India”, available on [www.axis.com](http://www.axis.com), p.1.

bilateral regional and global affairs.<sup>24</sup> I firmly count on your personal support for this endeavor”. He did not leave at that. He said, Dr. Manmohan Sigh “is the man who had launched major economic reforms that helped transform India into a leading global power”. President Putin visited India for an annual bilateral summit in December 2004. High-level meetings between the leaders of the two countries gave a new momentum to the bilateral and multilateral relations. The protocol for cooperation in diamonds was signed in during the visit. In this context, Mr. Kamal Nath, Indian cabinet minister, urged the Russian Minister to expedite the decision agreed by both sides for inclusion of MMTC in the list of regular participations for auction and tenders for selling of rough diamonds by Alrosa as also to explore the action taken by the Russian side for setting up a joint venture by Alrosa with MMTC for manufacturing jewelry in India<sup>25</sup>.

During Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s visit to Moscow in May 2005, both the countries decided to set up a Joint Study Group on Economic Cooperation to look into the feasibility of the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement<sup>26</sup>. During Manmohan Singh’s visit to Moscow in December 2005 to attend the sixth bilateral summit, Russian President Putin said that “we have been successfully cooperating in nuclear energy and that Kudankulam nuclear power project is an example. We see India taking necessary steps to build relations with the Nuclear Suppliers Groups”. Indian Prime Minister Singh observed a vast potential for expansion of cooperation in the field of civil nuclear energy given India’s growing energy requirements and the importance of nuclear energy as a clean and viable

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<sup>24</sup> See for details Dr. Manmohan Singh as quoted by V.D. Chopra, Note 4, p.194.

<sup>25</sup> For details see Rama Sampath Kumar, in “Indo-Russian Relations: Economic Opportunities or Continued Stagnation?” Note 3, p.232.

<sup>26</sup> See for details Jyotsna Bakshi, “Prime Minister’s Moscow Visit”, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 29, No.4, October-December, 2005, p. 732.

alternative energy source. Some of the most significant and promising areas of cooperation identified during the visit were energy, telecom and transportation. Under such changed circumstances, the agreement signed during the 2005 visit to India by Russian President Vladimir Putin between State bank of India, Canara Bank and several Russian banks to open operations in both countries assisted Russia-India business deals. This was important since trade and economic cooperation depend on the financial mechanisms of implementing the deals and projects and the recognition of bank guarantees. This agreement brought the banks of both the countries into each others markets, conforming to international trade practices<sup>27</sup>.

In order to achieve the goals laid out by Russian President Putin and to help strengthen cooperation between Russia and India, the Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) and the Ekspert Publishing House decided to create a new body, the Business Council of Cooperation with India, which was established on February 2nd, 2006<sup>28</sup>. Its founders, apart from the CCI and Ekspert, included Aeroflot, MiG, Saturn, Aerospace Equipment, Sistema, Salut and Infomost. Over 40 Russian companies and corporations, including such leaders as Severstal, Rusal, EuroChem, NPO Mashinostroyeniya, Sberbank, Avisma and others, showed interest in strengthening and developing business contacts, trade and economic relations between Russia and India. During the visit to India by Mr. Grman Gref, Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Russian Federation, in February 2006, an understanding was reached on setting up a Joint Study Group for the preparation of a programme to substantially increase the scale of cooperation and for the study of the possibility of

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<sup>27</sup> See for details Anuradha M. Chenoy, "India and Russia: Allies in The International Political System", *South Asian Survey*, Vol. 15, No. 1, January-June, 2008, p.58.

<sup>28</sup> See for details "Russian-Indian Cooperation as Indicator of Global Changes", *New Theme on Russian-Indian Affairs*, Vol. VII, Issue No. 6. November-December, 2006, p.11

working out an Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation<sup>29</sup>. It was also decided to organize a Russian-Indian Trade and Investment Forum in New Delhi in 2007, bringing to India up to 300 CEOs of major Russian public sector undertakings and private companies. The bilateral protocol on India's support to Russia on its accession to the WTO and Memorandum on Cooperation between the Russian Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and the Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry, stating an intention to increase by 2010 the bilateral trade turnover to 10 billion US dollars, are important milestones in the development of Russian-Indian economic ties. In February 2006, the "Virtual Exhibitions of the Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry" internet resource was awarded the gold medal by the Sixth Moscow International Saloon of innovations and Investments. Russian businessmen, who accompanied Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov during his Indian visit in March 2006, discussed substantive proposals with their Indian counterparts, and the newly created business council for cooperation with India and signed memorandums of understanding with CII, ASSOCHAM and FICCI<sup>30</sup>. India wished to take advantage of Mr. Fradkov's visit to secure further guarantees of wider access for its oil companies to the Russian hydrocarbon market. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation was trying to acquire Russia's Udmurtneft oil company, while Indian Oil was negotiating to buy a stake in Yuganskneftegas, a major Russian oil and gas firm. A large delegation accompanying Mr. Fradkov included Russian billionaires such as aluminium magnate Oleg Deripaska and head of AFK Sistema telecoms giant Vladimir Yevtushenkov, who were keen on investing in India's booming economy.

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<sup>29</sup> See for details "Indo-Russian Economic Ties: Back to The Future", *New Spring*, January, 2007, Special Edition Dedicated to the Official Visit of H.E. President Vladimir Putin in January 2007, p.15

<sup>30</sup> For details see M.K. Dhar, "Indo-Russian Relations: Need Re-Energizing", *New Theme: On Russian-Indian Affairs*, Vol. VII, Issue No. 2, March-April, 2007, p.5.

India and Russia today have established a new milestone in bilateral trade and economic relations, with India giving its consent to Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization and both sides setting up a Joint Study Group to finalize a roadmap for increasing the bilateral trade turnover to US \$ 10 billion by 2010. The protocol on completion of bilateral negotiations on the accession of Russia to the WTO and the MoU on cooperation between the Ministry of Commerce & Industry of India and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation were signed in 2006 by Mr. Kamal Nath, Minister of Commerce and Industry on behalf of the Government of India and by Mr. German Gref, Minister for Economic Development and Trade, on behalf of the Government of Russian Federation respectively. Mr. Kamal Nath said that, India was looking forward to Russia's early accession to the WTO for further cooperation in the multilateral trade forum on the basis of mutual benefit. Russian Ambassador to India Vyacheslav Trubnikov said New Delhi-Moscow trade could increase from \$2 billion to \$8-10 billion in the next five years<sup>31</sup>. On May 2, 2006, New Delhi hosted an international conference entitled "The World's Economic Development and the Role of Russia", held under the auspices of the Business Council and the Russian Center of the Jawaharlal Nehru Institute. Several speakers gave reports on the future of the global and Russian economies and on political and economic aspects of Russian-Indian relations. Russia was represented by the Business Council's leaders, an official delegation from the Russian parliament and representatives of the Russian Embassy in India. Indian participants included members of Parliament and the Indian government's Planning Commission, government ministers Oscar Fernandes and Shakil Ahmad, as well as leading experts, political scientists and journalists. The India-Russia Business Council's initial task was to help

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<sup>31</sup> See *The Hindu*, 15 March, 2006.

the Russian and Indian business communities to learn more about each other. It joined the Russian Economic Development and Trade Ministry's research group to study Russian-Indian trade and economic cooperation and to draft a relevant inter-governmental agreement. After coordinating with the ministry, the Business Council was asked to draft a plan for setting up the Russian-Indian Trade House, as well as to organize an economic forum to be held in New Delhi on December 8, 2006. With this aim in mind, Russian businessmen who accompanied Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov on his visit to India in March 2006 held important economic talks. Notably the Business Council signed a memorandum on cooperation with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and with India's largest chambers of commerce, the CII and ASSOCHAM. However, in August, 2006 at the Indo-Russian Joint Study Group the Russian co-chair Mikail Dimitriyev openly expressed his concern that Russian businessmen preferred Europe to India to do business with where his children study and where he spends his vacations. No other statement is necessary to emphasize the fact that 15 years after the break up of the Soviet Union, after signing several declarations and partnership pacts, our two countries have still not been able to translate their political trust into tangible results in economic interaction and trade<sup>32</sup>.

Further, Russian and Indian business women have taken up the responsibility of boosting trade between the two countries. "I am convinced we can multiply trade between India and Russia by 300-400 times by joining our efforts to tap the tremendous potential for bilateral trade," said Ms. Mukta Nandini Jain, President of the FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO)<sup>33</sup>. Ms. Jain, who was leading a 20-member delegation of Indian business women on their first visit to Russia, said there was no

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<sup>32</sup> See for details Mikail Dimitriyev as quoted by Rama Sampath Kumar, in "Indo-Russian Relations: Economic Opportunities or Continued Stagnation?", Note 3, p. 223.

<sup>33</sup> See for details *The Hindu*, 16 August, 2006

reason why Indo-Russian trade, stagnant at about \$2 billion for more than a decade, should not grow as big as Russia's trade with China, which crossed \$25 billion last year, or India's trade with China, which is projected to touch \$20 billion by 2010. She held that "we are aware of the vast opportunities for business in both countries, and we are sure these figures can be achieved if we work in a systematic manner," Ms. Jain told a joint press conference with leaders of Russian business women organizations<sup>34</sup>. During the press conference, women entrepreneurs of India and Russia resolved to reopen a chain store of Indian goods that operated in the Soviet Union under the name of 'Ganga'. It was also decided that the FLO sign long-term cooperation agreements with the Association of Russian Women Entrepreneurs, which boasts a membership of nearly one lakh, and the organization of Russian businesswomen, which brings together mostly finance experts.

The former Russian President Vladimir Putin was the chief guest at the Republic Day in New Delhi in January 2007. This was a strong indication of the underscoring importance that India attaches to Russia. Equally important was the visit of the former Russian Prime Minister, Zubkov, to India in February 2008 following the visit of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Moscow in November 2007. These entire high level visits were intended to strengthen political and economic ties between the two countries. For instance the significance of the visit of Zubkov lies in the fact that it coincided with the second session of Indo-Russia Economic Forum on Trade and Investment, which was attended by over 500 business representatives of both the countries from both public and private sectors. India's leading trading organizations such as FICCI, CII, and ASSOCHAM were represented in these

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid

meeting. Hence this event was expected to provide a fillip to B2B interaction between the two countries and a Joint Task Force which is expected to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Study Group to push trade and economic ties to new heights by removing the impediments to bilateral trade and commerce<sup>35</sup>. In the opinion of analysts there are good prospects of Indian and Russian companies working together in IT, financial services, power and energy sectors. Moreover, business groups of the two countries discussed cooperation in other key spheres such as transport, infrastructure, metallurgy and mining in both India and Russia. In this context it is worth noting that coinciding with Zubkov's visit to New Delhi, the Russian Vneshtorg bank and Russian telecom and services conglomerate giant Sistema inaugurated their representative offices in New Delhi, which may help in enhancing trade and economic ties between the two countries. As stated by the Russian Prime Minister, India-Russia bilateral trade in 2007 was about \$ 5 billion and it increased by 30 percent between 2005 and 2007.

The Indo-Russian economic cooperation is on the rise. According to the Vice-Premier of Russian Federation Zhukov, Moscow hopes to increase bilateral trade to the annual level estimated by \$10 billion in the nearest years. By investing into the leading Indian economy branch of high technologies, and by controlling country's power market, Moscow acquired an opportunity to amplify its influence on Indian foreign policy. The transport "South-North" corridor, which connects India with the EU through Russia and Iran, will, most likely, lead to the decrease of the share of Indo-American trade in total New Delhi's import-export balance. And inevitably this will affect the entire mutual relations between New Delhi and Washington. Besides,

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<sup>35</sup> See details R.G. Gidadhubli, "India-Russia Economic Ties: Trends, Constraints and Prospects", *World Focus*, Vol. XXIX, No. 8, 2008, p.306.

due to ITC Russia created conditions for appearance of the powerful South Asian economic alliance (India - Iran), which can include other countries of the region. Together with the other abovementioned levers of pressure, and by means of military technological cooperation with India, Russia sets up preconditions leading to the decrease of the American presence (including military) in the Indian Ocean region in the 21st century. Significant strengthening of the Russian influence in the South Asia achieved through all these means, may lead to the reviving of the Soviet idea of creation of a powerful triple Russia - India - China alliance. Indian companies could also help Russian restructuring and modernization through its expertise in information technology, management and financial services. While addressing the members of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in Bangalore, President Putin said that India's cooperation would be useful in areas such as CI ongoing research and development of super computers in Russia. He called for bold steps in joint projects in basic electronics, information technology, telecommunications, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, space, atomic energy, machine and technical production n for the coal industry, and metallurgy. While realizing the re potential, the CII has already reopened its office in Moscow.

There are numerous potentials for bilateral economic cooperation. While India could fill the vast consumer markets in Russia, the latter could meet India's requirements in the areas of energy, metallurgy, arms and nuclear equipments. One of the important areas of cooperation is energy. More concrete steps need to be taken especially in the areas of infrastructure both organizational and geographic, visa, and diversification of areas of cooperation, services and technology.

Future bilateral economic relations will depend on Russia's importance to India's developmental needs and vice versa. In the past, USSR played an important role in India's industrialisation process. It had a comparative advantage in sectors like steel, which was central to its needs. India has to assess now where Russia has a comparative advantage. So far India is able to identify only defense production and oil and gas sector. Similarly Indian companies could help Russian restructuring and modernization through its expertise in information technology, management and financial services. In the immediate future, two factors will determine the future of Indo-Russian economic relations. Firstly, sustained growth of the Russian economy and secondly, competitiveness of Indian industry, commerce and services. The strong political will in both the countries to improve bilateral economic relations could have been converted into real economic gains if some imaginative initiatives were taken. The present Indo-Russian commercial relations are certainly not commensurate with the existing potential. To improve these relations, some bold policy initiatives are needed. There is a lot of merit in studying a bilateral preferential or free trade agreement. This kind of initiative has the potential to give new direction to bilateral relations. The "strategic partnership" document also says that both the countries will jointly explore the possibilities of regional trading arrangements with the third countries. So far nothing has happened on this front. Some kind of regional economic initiative is possible in the CIS region, particularly in Central Asia. Russia and other CIS economies are growing fast in the last few years. Indian economy is expected to grow about 6-7 percent this year. This is the right time to give a new direction to Indo-Russian economic relations.

What Felix Yurlov, Professor at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow, said in 2004 holds true in the context of Indo-Russian economic cooperation. According to

Prof. Yurlov political relations between India and Russia cannot be full fledged unless accompanied by proportional economic cooperation. It is common knowledge that the level of economic cooperation between the two countries is meagre compared to the huge potential both the countries possess.

Xinhua, the Chinese newspaper on 13 November 2007 observed on the 8th bilateral summit under the caption, 'How far could Russia, India ties go further. "The mood seems good and the targets vivid. But there's still something Moscow and New Delhi differ with, which could hinder their pushy strive. Both the countries have good political relations, but the 'superb' equations without economic content would likely give way to the emergence of a lacklustre relationship unless the significant steps are taken to boost economic cooperation. It can be noted that when weapons are left out of the equation, bilateral trade has actually fallen to its lowest level for more than two decades. Trade turnover without military cooperation is estimated at about meagre \$2 billion annually. Hence, the 'rupee-reactor' syndrome has to be overcome and transformed in to multifarious economic activities to achieve the mutual goal of striking bilateral trade at \$10 billion by 2010.

Table – 1

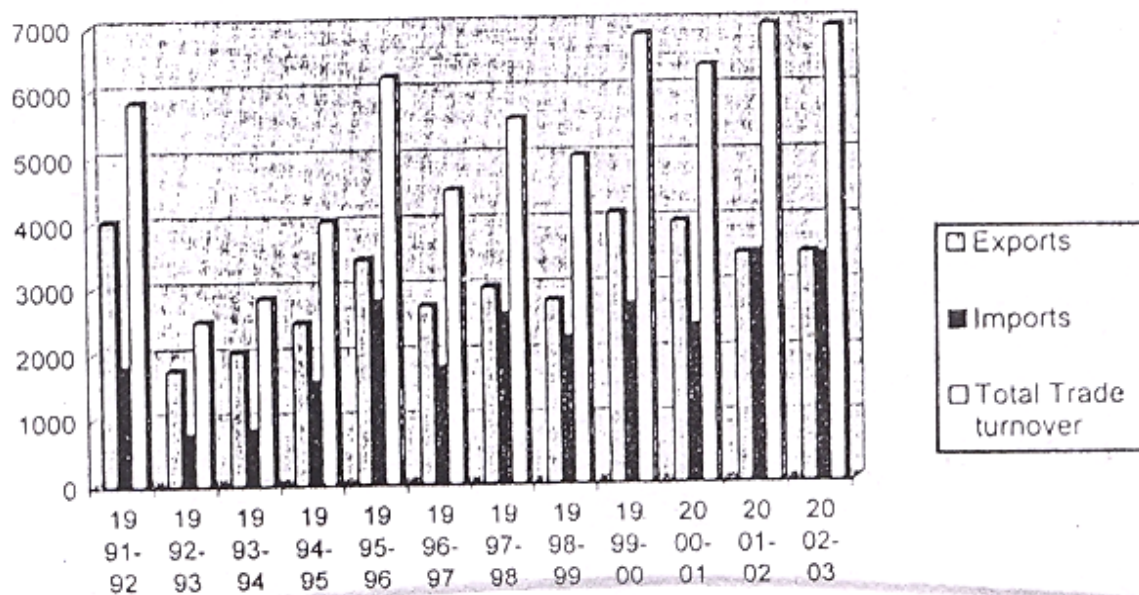
**India-Russia Trade (1993-2004)**

Year	Exports	% Share of Total Indian Exports	Imports	% Share of Total Indian Imports	Total Trade	% Share of Total Indian Trade
1993-94	648.60	2.92	256.89	1.10	905.49	1.98
1994-95	807.38	3.07	504.54	1.76	1311.92	2.39
1995-96	1046.55	3.29	857.53	2.33	1904.09	2.78
1996-97	811.84	2.42	628.96	1.61	1440.8	1.98
1997-98	954.12	2.72	679.02	1.63	1633.14	2.13
1998-99	706.24	2.14	545.42	1.29	1254.68	1.66
1999- 2000	948.99	2.58	623.94	1.25	1572.93	1.82
2000-01	869.93	1.97	517.19	1.03	1387.12	1.47
2001-02	796.83	1.82	538.36	1.05	1332.19	1.41
2002-03	704.00	1.34	592.61	0.96	1296.61	1.14
2003-04	713.76	1.12	959.63	1.23	1673.39	1.18

Source: Center for Monitoring Indian Economy and Ministry of Commerce,  
Government of India

**Graph-1**

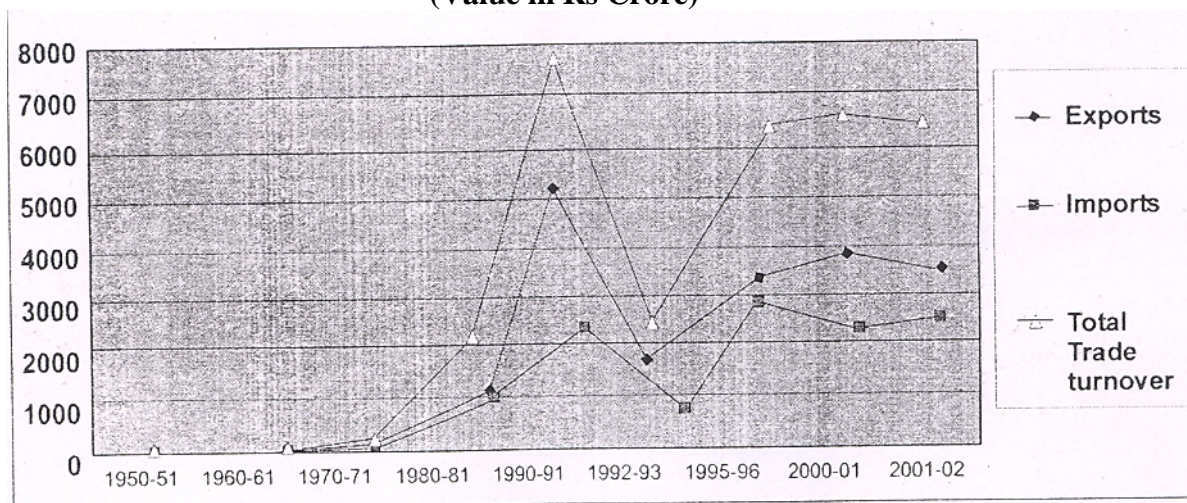
**Trends in Indo-Russian Bilateral Trade (1991-2003)**  
(Value in Crores)



**Graph- 2**

**Trends in Indo-Russian Bilateral Trade (1950-51 to 2001-02)**

(Value in Rs Crore)



**Table - 2**

**Composition of India's Top 10 Commodities Exports To Russia (1991-2008)**

**(US \$ MILLION)**

Sl. No	Commodities	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
1	Drugs, Pharam & Fine Chemicals	NA	NA	89.82	89.84	90.92	108.99	106.07	47.65	113.94	108.95	101.00
2	Tea	NA	NA	99.82	86.36	142.69	75.04	198.49	197.89	162.07	105.01	84.00
3	Machinery & Instruments	NA	NA	16.97	26.54	20.39	20.92	14.15	18.84	24.27	14.09	16.00
4	Transport Equipment	NA	NA	NA	3.68	10.07	3.82	4.25	3.93	3.48	2.22	5.00
5	Cotton Yarn Fabrics Madeups etc.	NA	NA	14.56	31.67	35.52	61.78	76.61	51.23	69.18	67.78	26.00
6	RMG of Cotton Inclusive Accessories	NA	NA	28.29	27.03	39.66	30.47	52.92	93.13	152.37	208.23	216.00
7	Coffee	NA	NA	26.10	44.96	102.10	85.78	93.97	59.17	56.77	63.19	66.00
8	Tobacco Unmanufactured	NA	NA	48.7	4.77	21.63	30.35	59.27	25.12	46.60	27.49	21.00
9	Plastic & Linoleum Products	NA	NA	59.88	25.01	27.94	32.82	30.80	12.64	25.48	21.35	16.00

10	Processed Fruit & Juicies	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.87	1.72	0.93	0.78	0.90	1.
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Source: Foreign Trade & Balance of Payments, Center for Monitoring Indian Economy Pvt. Ltd.,

August 2008.

**Table - 2****Composition of India's Top 10 Commodities Imports From Russia (1991-2008)****(US \$ MILLION)**

Sl No	Commodities	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	Iron & Steel	NA	NA	3.65	40.50	130.66	77.17	157.42	75.16	60.91	101.27	51.43	102.47	189.04	338.32	594.85	406	405.17
2	Non-Ferrous Metal	NA	NA	72.07	135.25	179.10	164.33	136.17	55.57	60.70	61.38	59.35	68.57	146.44	154.98	240.36	274	383.93
3	Fertilizer Manufactured	NA	NA	78.34	82.69	168.33	29.52	77.17	149.44	200.96	86.31	137.70	96.70	140.79	231.37	484.87	315	274.24
4	Organic Chemicals	NA	NA	5.36	22.08	45.72	29.19	34.73	19.19	15.33	5.09	6.89	12.08	21.95	23.39	41.59	50.1	136.85
5	Synthetic & Reclaimed Rubber	NA	NA	0.83	4.01	4.42	4.83	8.10	12.41	17.10	16.76	30.81	37.57	54.94	65.86	78.86	110	124.21
6	Non-Electricals Machinery	NA	NA	13.18	36.86	47.57	27.83	39.09	21.88	30.81	16.78	17.59	28.70	33.39	29.48	48.22	53.8	82.89
7	Metal ferrous Ores & Metal Scrap	NA	NA	2.82	7.88	9.97	10.89	17.21	13.40	21.91	7.26	4.05	6.74	7.91	8.43	53.02	55.6	77.68
8	News Print	NA	NA	35.54	41.34	85.38	74.13	82.26	60.93	53.01	64.04	63.89	63.28	73.27	90.91	98.28	93.7	74.18
9	Silver	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	8.38	1.12	6.83	7.12	15.35	71.72	141.88	93.7	74.18
10	Other Crude Minerals	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.66	4.13	3.08	5.71	6.85	15.01	15.10	21.90	21.28	40.97	NA	NA

**Source: Foreign Trade & Balance of Payments, Center for Monitoring Indian Economy Pvt. Ltd., August 2008.**

Table - 3

## Composition of India's Top 10 Commodities Exports To Russia (1991-2008)

(US \$ MILLION)

Sl. No	Commodities	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	Drugs, Pharam & Fine Chemicals	NA	NA	89.82	89.84	90.92	108.99	106.07	47.65	113.94	108.95	101.22	103.00	140.05	172.15	237.38	292	297.96
2	Tea	NA	NA	99.82	86.36	142.69	75.04	198.49	197.89	162.07	105.01	84.75	59.44	56.63	52.07	49.84	61.6	70.86
3	Machinery & Instruments	NA	NA	16.97	26.54	20.39	20.92	14.15	18.84	24.27	14.09	16.96	12.55	14.84	21.28	28.82	45.2	59.31
4	Transport Equipment	NA	NA	NA	3.68	10.07	3.82	4.25	3.93	3.48	2.22	5.68	14.30	5.71	13.91	29.71	21.7	47.32
5	Cotton Yarn Fabrics Madeups etc.	NA	NA	14.56	31.67	35.52	61.78	76.61	51.23	69.18	67.78	26.70	15.60	17.91	13.72	29.56	33.6	45.59
6	RMG of Cotton Inclusive Accessories	NA	NA	28.29	27.03	39.66	30.47	52.92	93.13	152.37	208.23	216.70	219.58	164.58	79.09	18.65	56.4	42.28
7	Coffee	NA	NA	26.10	44.96	102.10	85.78	93.97	59.17	56.77	63.19	66.99	46.30	46.05	40.45	67.38	50.9	38.89
8	Tobacco Unmanufactured	NA	NA	48.7	4.77	21.63	30.35	59.27	25.12	46.60	27.49	21.61	24.13	20.88	31.61	39.26	28.9	28.83
9	Plastic & Linoleum Products	NA	NA	59.88	25.01	27.94	32.82	30.80	12.64	25.48	21.35	16.45	13.61	22.38	24.31	28.79	28.7	21.91
10	Processed Fruit & Juicies	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.87	1.72	0.93	0.78	0.90	1.20	3.12	5.73	11.62	31.00	NA	NA

Source: Foreign Trade &amp; Balance of Payments, Center for Monitoring Indian Economy Pvt. Ltd., August 2008.

## **Chapter : VI**

### **Conclusion**

Our study shows that the relations between India and Russia have been smooth and stable for long spells of time but the same were subjected to uncertainty during certain periods. Like in the immediate aftermath of collapse of Soviet Union and the first few years of Boris Yeltsin's presidency. This study also brings out that the nature of leadership played an important role in shaping the Indo-Russian relations. The relations were neither similar nor uniform under different leaders or regimes. For example, during the initial period of Indo-Soviet relations, Joseph Stalin, was reluctant to develop friendly relations with India (see page no 22)<sup>1</sup>. In the post Stalin era, however, the Soviet leaders like G.M. Malenkov, N.A. Bulganin, N.S. Khrushchev made efforts to establish friendly relations with India. But it was during Leonid Brezhnev's times that the bilateral relations between India and Soviet Union reached their peak. When President Boris Yelstin came to power in Russia, in the initial period, he was interested to move closer to the West. In the process, the former close non-Western allies were neglected. India was no exception. His Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, who was liked by the West, explored the possibilities of forging strategic partnerships with the West. As a result of all these moves, Indo-Russian relations suffered a set back. Only after President Boris Yeltsin got disillusion with the West, that the 'Western emphasis' in Russia's foreign policy got undermined. Boris Yeltsin woke up to the Asianness of Russia and made efforts to win back the former

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<sup>1</sup> Page number in the chapter "conclusion" refers to page number in the main body of this thesis.

close friends and allies, particularly in Asia. This resulted in Yeltsin's visit to China and India and the revival of warm relations between Russia and her Asian neighbours (see page no 91). When President Vladimir Putin took over the reigns of power in 2000, he made consistent efforts to revive Indo-Russian relations. India and Russia agreed for arrangements of annual summits, i.e. meetings between Russian President and the Indian Prime Minister (see page no 111). Our study shows that the relationship between India and Russia had been steady and strong in specific areas like defence. But relations in other areas have not been so consistent and strong.

Our study aims at a multi-dimensional study of Indo-Russian relations between 1991-2008. In keeping with this each chapter was devoted to each important dimension. In chapter I, we have tried to show how foreign policy seeks to protect vital interests pursued by the states. We have argued that the strategic dimension is an integral part of foreign policy of states. With their foreign policy initiatives, nations protect their vital interests, ensure their security systems, achieve their common goals and solve their common problems. This appears to be a dynamic and broad understanding, the scope of which can be expanded from time to time as and when the situation demands. With this perspective in mind, the strategic, military and economic relationships between India and Russia during 1991- 2008, their perception on global and regional politics, security and mutual interests were examined.

In chapter II, we have attempted to give a historical overview of Indo-Soviet relations up to 1991. Historically, during 1947-1953 the Soviet Union was far from friendly towards India. Only under the leadership of Brezhnev that these relations reached their peak. The Soviet Union realized the importance of India as the leader of Non-Alignment Movement in particular and as an emerging third world country in general. The relations assumed both intensive and expensive dimensions and remained

stable and strong (see page no 23). Brezhnev's legacy was carried forward by Gorbachev who was extremely friendly towards India.

In the post Soviet period, Russia's foreign policy towards India has been classified into three phases i.e., the first phase from 1991 to 1995 was marked by a period of uncertainties and confusions. The second phase corresponds the period between 1995 to 2000, when India's place in the Russian foreign policy scheme of things had been reprioritized, thereby viewing India as a dependable and reliable partner. Finally, the third phase, which starts from the year 2000 onwards could be noted as the phase of constructive engagement. It was during this third phase that Moscow moved in the direction of consolidating its ties with New Delhi.

In chapter III, we have studied strategic dimensions of the Indo-Russian relations. The year 1991 was a watershed. The Soviet Union collapsed. The whole edifice of Indo-Soviet relations developed wide cracks. Here, the new leader Boris Yeltsin, initially did not help the matters. He was bent upon forging close relation with the West. He and Kozyrev neglected old friends and allies. The supply of spare parts to India got disrupted as Ukraine and Belarus where the production units located, became independent states. To make the matters worst India's excessive obsession with Gorbachev did not allow her to assess Yeltsin and his emergence as a dominant leader. India had to pay a price for it. It was the realization by Yeltsin himself that the 'Western emphasis' did not yield the desired results that caused a change in Indo-Russian relations. Yeltsin sought to win back old friends and allies. The Indo-Russian relations were back in the business. The whole process culminated in Yeltsin's visit to India in 1993 and subsequent visits by dignitaries of both sides to each others country. These visits served to revive the Indo-Russian relations. President Putin gave a new shape to this process and made it steady and strong. It was during his time that India

and Russia became strategic partners with a vision to take Indo-Russian trade to turn over to 10 billion of dollars (see page no 113).

In chapter IV, we have studied military dimensions of the Indo-Russian relations. The study shows that during the post Soviet period, defence co-operation was high on their agenda. Both the countries have been cooperating with each other in the areas of joint research and development, joint production, and joint marketing for third world countries. Both India and Russia decided to extend the tenure of Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission for Military-Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC) for another ten years till 2020 leading to a further strengthening of ties between both countries. General Andrei, Chairman of the Defence Committee of the State of Duma said that by strengthening India's defence systems, Russia was reinforcing her own security. And finally, owing to the past legacy and ongoing projects, Russia will remain, at least for the foreseeable future, a major defence partner of India.

In chapter V, we have examined the economic dimensions of Indo-Russian relations. Our study shows as far as the nature of trade exchanges between the two countries is concerned, Russia always enjoyed an upper hand and hence the balance of trade remained tilted in favour of Russia. The notable fact is that the Russians were willing to accept Indian rupee for trade transactions. As a result, huge rupee debt was accumulated. In subsequent periods, what came to be known as 'rupee-rouble tangle' served to complicate Indo-Russian relations. Only after Prime Minister Primakov's visit to India in 1998 that this tangle was finally resolved and India agreed to pay yearly installments to clear the backlog.

Finally, it can be said that the relationship between India and Russia have been governed by mutual respect for each others national interests and may be expected to remain the same in the near future. It may be argued that Indo-Russian relations are

time-tested. The institutions of annual summits between Russia and India have served to focus attention on the bilateral relations between the two countries and their efforts at multilateral co-operation wherein the Indo-Russian relations can play an important role in shaping the future world order. The unipolar world order which came into existence after the collapse of the Soviet Union can be replaced by a multipolar world order if the Asian powers in general and India and Russia in particular could come closer to each other.

Despite several ups and downs, India's relations with Russia have developed in a unique way and the future relations could be sustained by commonality of interests. It can be said that the current Indo-Russian relations are based on the new global reality. However, in the post-Cold War environment, both India and Russia have much to accomplish together. India and Russia are collaborating to check the spread of religious extremism and terrorism. In the year 2007, the two countries celebrated the diamond jubilee of the establishment of their diplomatic relations. On this day, India's External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, in an interview to the Russian media said that, "going by its content and durability, Indo-Russian partnership is simply unparalleled in our post independence diplomatic history. I do not think it could have been put any better". Writing in the Indian media, the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, expressed similar views and sentiments when he said, "Russia highly values its relations with India. We entered the twenty first century as strategic partners. The experience of sixty years of diplomatic relations indicates that mutually beneficial Russian Indian cooperation will be enhanced, benefiting our countries and helping to bring about global peace and stability". President Putin during his visit to Bangalore in 2004 said that "we don't have any problems. The two nations are and will be allies and friends for years to come. We are natural allies."

Our study confirms much of what Sergei Lavrov and President Vladimir Putin have said. There is no denying the fact that there have been some ups and downs in the Indo-Russian relations in the past. History might repeat itself. But it can be maintained with fair amount of confidence that the future ups and down may not disrupt, much less cause a collapse of the relations between India and Russia.

## **APPENDIX - I**

### **Visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin Joint Statement on the outcome of the Official Visit**

New Delhi

January 25, 2007.

The President of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. Vladimir V. Putin, paid an official visit to the Republic of India on January 25-26, 2007 at the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Republic of India Dr. Manmohan Singh. President Vladimir Putin is the first Russian Head of State who is participating as the Chief Guest at the celebrations on the occasion of the Republic Day. Besides a high level official delegation, President Putin was accompanied by a group of top Russian businessmen and industrialists representing diverse areas.

During his stay in New Delhi, President Vladimir Putin met the President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh. The Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi called on President Vladimir Putin. President Vladimir Putin also participated in a business meeting attended by high level representatives from the trade and industrial circles of India and Russia.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of the Russian Federation recalled with satisfaction their meeting in July 2006 on the sidelines of the G-8 Summit in St. Petersburg where the Russian Presidency had invited India as an outreach country. The two leaders discussed a broad range of issues relating to bilateral cooperation and exchanged views on important regional and international issues of mutual interest and concern. The talks were held in the traditionally warm

and cordial atmosphere that is characteristic of the longstanding India-Russia friendship. They noted with particular interest that this visit took place in the year when the two sides were actively preparing to jointly commemorate the 60th anniversary (on April 13, 2007) of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the Russian Federation. They expressed satisfaction that, despite many momentous developments affecting global geopolitical situation over the last several decades, India and Russia have consistently remained close and friendly partners, with a continued commitment at the highest political level to further consolidate their ties. The following documents were signed at the conclusion of the talks between the Prime Minister of India and the President of the Russian Federation. Programme of Cultural Exchanges between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation for the Years 2007-2009;

- Protocol between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on holding “Year of Russia in India” in the year 2008 and “Year of India in Russia” in the Year 2009;

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on the access of the Indian Party to navigation signals of the Russian Global Navigation Satellite System GLONASS for peaceful purposes;

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on access of the Indian Party to a part of the Russian Global Navigation Satellite System GLONASS radio frequency spectrum;

- Agreement between the Indian Space Research Organization and the Federal Space Agency on cooperation in the joint satellite project 'YOUTHSAT';
- Memorandum of Intent between the Department of Atomic Energy, the Government of the Republic of India and Federal Atomic Energy Agency, the Russian Federation on development of cooperation in the construction of additional nuclear power plant units at Kudankulam site as well as in the construction of Russian design nuclear power plants at new sites in the Republic of India;
- Joint Statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of India and the President of the Russian Federation on cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of atomic energy;
- Plan of major events to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation (April 13, 2007).

The Sides stress that durable, friendly and mutually beneficial relations between the two countries are based on deep mutual confidence and understanding. The strategic partnership between India and Russia has served not only the long-term national interests of both countries but has also effectively contributed to stability and security in Asia and the world in general. The two countries hold identical or similar views on most international issues. The Prime Minister of India and the President of the Russian Federation highly value the successful practice of holding annual summits that have played a key role in consistently adding greater strategic content to the wide-ranging cooperation between the two countries. These Summits encourage intensive contacts

between India and Russia at all levels with a view to further intensifying bilateral cooperation.

During the talks, the two Sides reviewed the implementation of the decisions taken during the India-Russia Summit in December 2005. While expressing satisfaction at the ongoing multifaceted cooperation, the Sides support its further development, particularly in priority spheres such as high technologies, telecommunications, outer space, metallurgy, energy, nuclear power and military and technical cooperation.

The Sides reaffirm their intention to intensify efforts to further develop and diversify their trade and economic cooperation. Noting that the Indian-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation provides an important mechanism for the development of trade and economic ties, the Sides stress the need to pay particular attention to the further promotion of bilateral trade and investment, including in energy, technology and knowledge-intensive economic sectors.

The Sides express satisfaction over the signing in February 2006 of the India-Russia Protocol on completion of negotiations on Russia's accession to the WTO. Particular importance is attached to the setting up of a Joint Study Group (JSG) in 2006 to work out practical recommendations aimed at effectively tapping the opportunities available in both countries to substantially raise their bilateral trade and economic cooperation. As an immediate step, the Sides support early finalization of a result-oriented programme of action by the JSG to increase their bilateral trade to US \$ 10 billion by 2010.

The Sides advocate every possible effort to expand mutually beneficial contacts between the business communities of the two countries. They welcome the initiatives taken in this direction by the industrial and business associations of India and Russia, aimed at strengthening the important role played by the Joint Business Council. The Sides also agree to take steps to remove the existing barriers impeding the promotion of bilateral trade.

The Sides appreciate the establishment of the Indo-Russian Forum for Trade and Investment, co-chaired by the Minister of Commerce and Industry of India and the Minister of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation. They are optimistic that its first meeting in India in February 2007 at which a large number of top businessmen from both sides are preparing to participate will yield positive results.

Noting the vital role played by energy in economic growth, the Sides attach particular importance to energy security issues. They endorse the concept of 'energy security' envisaging an acceptable balance between security of demand and security of supply. In view of their corresponding resources, needs, capabilities and potential, the Sides agree to further enhance direct dialogue between their oil and gas companies aimed at concluding concrete and mutually beneficial commercial agreements for joint work in all segments of oil and gas cooperation in India, Russia and third countries. The arrival of the first shipment of oil to India from Sakhalin-I in early December 2006 as well as the signing on January 25, 2007 of an MoU between ONGC and Rosneft oil company setting up two joint Working Groups - one each for upstream and downstream activities - demonstrate the viability of future India-Russia cooperation in the entire hydrocarbon value chain. The Sides also expressed satisfaction at the

progress in the ongoing construction of two nuclear power plants in Kudankulam (India) with Russian participation.

The Sides note with satisfaction that the progressive expansion of their traditionally important cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of outer space is based on deep mutual trust and high capabilities of the two countries in this sphere. In this context, they particularly welcome the signing of additional bilateral agreements during the present visit to jointly implement wide-ranging cooperation in the Russian Global Navigation Satellite System GLONASS. They also express satisfaction at the signing of a bilateral document to jointly develop and launch a Youth Satellite for educational purposes.

Military-technical cooperation between India and Russia has traditionally remained a major pillar of the bilateral strategic partnership. The Sides note with satisfaction that mutually beneficial interaction in the field of defence has steadily progressed from a buyer-seller format to also include joint research and development, manufacturing and marketing, regular service to service interaction and joint exercises. As a leading example of their shared potential in high technological collaboration, the India-Russia joint venture to manufacture Brahmos missile, which is expanding in scope, has led the way to further such joint projects. The Sides note with satisfaction the in-principle decision to jointly develop a new Multi-Role Transport Aircraft.

India and Russia, while recognizing vast possibilities offered by rapid development and mass use of information and communication technologies, systems and utilities, including internet, express their concern that along with the gains, new

threats of use of information technologies have emerged, which are incompatible with the goals of ensuring international stability and security both in civil and military spheres. The Sides express their readiness to continue bilateral India-Russia dialogue and intensify joint efforts directed at strengthening national and international information security, including combating criminal and terrorist activities.

The Sides recall with satisfaction their wide-ranging bilateral cooperation in the field of science and technology that has been successfully and jointly steered and conducted in the framework of the Integrated Long Term Programme (ILTP). They affirm to jointly commemorate the 20th anniversary (on July 3, 2007) of the establishment of the ILTP. As a major initiative, the Sides welcome the decision to set up an India-Russia Technology Centre in Moscow to facilitate and channelize commercial /industrial applications of new jointly developed technologies. The Sides recognize that this new facet to S&T cooperation would also provide a stimulant effect to the overall scope of joint work. The Signing of the relevant Joint Work Document would enable the Centre to begin concrete work.

The Sides have agreed to continue work on the North-South international transport corridor project, in the interests of further development of trade and economic cooperation between India and Russia.

Cultural cooperation and people to people contacts have traditionally played an important role in promoting greater understanding and closer friendship between India and Russia. In this context, the Sides welcome the signing of the bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme and the Protocol to celebrate 2008 as the “Year of Russia in India” and 2009 as the “Year of India in Russia”. The Sides appreciate ongoing joint

efforts aimed at development of partnership relations between institutions of the two countries in the fields of culture, Indian and Russian studies and languages. They agree to consider new mechanisms, including financial, to accelerate this trend through greater interaction between Indian and Russian scholars.

The Sides will work towards the establishment of a multipolar world order based on the principles of the rule of law, sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs of States. Activities aimed at strengthening a central coordinating role of the United Nations in maintaining peace and security, and at increasing the efficiency and authority of the UN, form important elements of India-Russia cooperation at the international level. India and Russia stress the need to implement the process of UN reform, so as to reflect contemporary realities. In this context, the Russian Federation reiterates once again that it regards India as an influential and major member of the international community. The Russian Federation reaffirms its support to India as a deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership in an expanded UN Security Council.

India and Russia strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Both Sides reaffirm that terrorism is one of the gravest threats to international peace and security, and that there can be no justification for any act of terrorism, irrespective of motivations, wherever and by whosoever committed. They are also convinced that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any nationality, religious, cultural or ethnic group. The Sides affirm that bilateral cooperation in counter-terrorism is an important dimension of their strategic partnership. They agree to consolidate joint efforts in suppressing financing of international terrorism and fighting illicit drug trafficking.

The Sides reiterate their intention to continue comprehensive long-term international cooperation to combat terrorism and to address other new challenges and threats, acting on the basis of international law under the UN auspices as well as within other relevant international organizations of which India and Russia are members. They oppose double standards in combating this phenomenon. They will cooperate to implement the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and to ensure an early entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Both Sides affirm their strong interest in promptly reaching an agreement on the draft Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism submitted by India.

The Sides note with concern the risk posed by the spread of terrorist ideologies and express their determination to counter this threat basing these efforts on UN SC resolution 1624, including through enhancing, in every possible way, dialogue among civilizations and cultures.

The Sides are interested in strengthening bilateral and multilateral interaction in Central Asia, which would contribute to enhanced stability and security in the region, including through closer and mutually beneficial cooperation with individual countries in the region based on shared interests and mutual respect. India and Russia advocate the development of practical cooperation among all partner countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The Sides are concerned about the continuing deterioration of the situation in Afghanistan and the growing terrorist threat posed by the Taliban and other extremist forces. India and Russia will continue to participate in the post-war recovery in

Afghanistan and are interested in strengthening its statehood and in the reemergence of that country as a peaceful, democratic, independent and prosperous state.

The Sides are convinced that an effective solution to the Iranian nuclear issue is best found through political and diplomatic efforts. In this regard the unanimous adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1737 is significant. It underscores the need for more active and transparent cooperation of Iran with the IAEA in order to resolve outstanding verification issues. They agreed that implementation of the Resolution should facilitate resumption of negotiations for a long-term comprehensive agreement which would allow for the development of relations and cooperation with Iran based on mutual respect and the establishment of international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

The Sides call for ensuring peace and security on the Korean Peninsula, maintaining it free from nuclear weapons and addressing the nuclear problem through the six-party talks based on the Joint Statement of September 19, 2005.

The Sides reaffirm their commitment to securing a comprehensive, lasting and just settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on a firm international legal basis, i.e. relevant UNSC resolutions, the Madrid Principles and the Road Map. They also support the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted in Beirut in 2002. They condemn violence by all sides and call for negotiated solutions. They advocate the active support of the international community, the Quartet and regional players for efforts aimed at normalizing the situation in West Asia and Middle East, and resuming dialogue on all tracks; the Palestinian, the Lebanese and the Syrian, for comprehensive and durable peace in the region.

The Sides express concern over the continuing deterioration of the situation in Iraq. They believe that a return to peace, stability and progress in Iraq can only be achieved through reconciliation and a broad internal dialogue between all ethnic and religious groups and political forces of the country. India and Russia believe that the developments in Iraq indicate the need for collective international efforts aimed towards an early normalization of the situation in the country.

The Sides call for expansion of cooperation within the China-Russia-India trilateral format. The first trilateral summit-level meeting, which took place in July 2006 in the outreach format of the G8 events in St. Petersburg, gave a fresh impetus to enhancing multifaceted interaction among the three states. The trilateral interaction promotes the development of mutually beneficial economic cooperation among India, Russia and China, enhances international accord in the field of countering new challenges and threats, especially in the fight against terrorism, and contributes to strengthening peace and stability in Asia and throughout the world.

The Sides reaffirm their strong commitment to strengthening their relations in every possible way, and express their conviction that the strategic partnership contributes to the development of mutually beneficial and comprehensive bilateral cooperation, and serves the cause of peace, security, stability and sustainable development at the regional and global levels. The President of the Russian Federation invited the Prime Minister of the Republic of India to visit Russia at a mutually convenient time for the next annual Summit. The invitation was gladly accepted.

Source: *Strategic Digest*, Vol. 37, No. 2, February 2007, pp. 152-157.

## **APPENDIX – II**

### **Plan to Commemorate the 60th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between the Russia and India**

Joint Statements

Press Releases

Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi

30 January, 2007

The Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries,

Guided by their mutual interest to strengthen friendly relations and deepen their strategic partnership,

Have agreed to make arrangements for the jubilee events as follows:

1. Exchange of messages of congratulations at the summit level.
2. Exchange of messages of congratulations between the co-chairmen of the Intergovernmental Russian-Indian Commission on trade and economic, scientific and technical and cultural cooperation.
3. Exchange of messages of congratulations between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries.
4. Official receptions in the Embassies on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

5. Publication of articles of the Foreign Ministers on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.
6. Round tables to be convened by the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs, with participation of academicians and scholars from both countries.
7. Events to be organized by Embassy's cultural departments in each country devoted to different periods and directions of cooperation between the two countries.
8. A special exhibition and official reception on the venue of the Center of History of the Russian Foreign Service to mark the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Source: *Strategic Digest*, Vol. 37, No. 2, February 2007, pp. 161-162.

## **APPENDIX – III**

### **Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's Visit to Russia**

#### **Statement on Departure for Russia**

New Delhi

December 4, 2005

My visit to Moscow for the annual Summit-level interaction with President Putin is I believe a signifier of the importance both our countries attach to our relations with each other.

I am honoured that my visit is taking place exactly 50 years after India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru paid his landmark visit to the then USSR, setting our two nations on the path of an enduring strategic partnership. This partnership is a cornerstone of India's foreign policy and the declared priority for both our countries. Marked by warmth, trust and mutual confidence, the bilateral relationship is underpinned by a mutuality of interests across the broadest spectrum of cooperation and promotes the shared goal of peace and prosperity for all.

In what will be my fourth meeting with President Putin this year, I look forward to reviewing all key aspects of our relationship. Our defence partnership – by far the most prominent facet of our interaction – continues to grow at a satisfactory pace. We hope to build a similar, long-term partnership in the field of energy security covering a range of energy sources. I will explore with President Putin the means whereby we may enhance trade and investments and technology cooperation between the two of the fastest growing economies of the world.

The India-Russia relationship is an important factor in the creation of a secure and stable multi-polar world. My mission is to work with our Russian friends to reinforce the already strong framework of this very important relationship.

**Speech by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan**

**Singh at the Indo-Russian Business Meet.**

Moscow

December 5, 2005.

It gives me great pleasure to be in your midst this afternoon. I am glad this opportunity has been created for senior representatives of Indian trade and industry to meet their Russian counterparts. I hope your discussions will provide a much-needed impetus to our economic and commercial engagement.

India and Russia have a time tested relationship marked by close political understanding and convergence of views on all major issues. The economic dimension of our relationship has been historically marked by government facilitated trade and industry. There has been little direct interaction between the leaders of private enterprise of the two countries since in the past; government and state-owned enterprises had a higher profile.

The global and bilateral environment has now changed. The economies of Russia and India have registered GDP growth rates of about 7% in recent years. New potential areas of growth have emerged in both economies and new areas of bilateral cooperation have opened up. Structural reforms in both economies and advances in science and technology have given our respective economies new strengths and capabilities which we should seek to exploit for mutual benefit.

Indian firms are attaining global levels in quality and output. India has become a production base and export hub for a range of products from agricultural goods to automobile components to high end and IT enabled services. Indian firms are now part of global production chains--importing, sub-assembling, adding value and re-exporting. Corporations from all over the world are establishing themselves in India to take advantage of the pool of high quality scientific talent and work force, in the manufacturing and services sectors.

I would like to place on record the fact that in many areas of India's success story, there is a strong Russian connection. Particularly in the early years of our independence we received valuable assistance from the Soviet Union in the establishment of our infrastructure and heavy industries. We acknowledge with gratitude Russian scientific and technological assistance for progress in several critical areas including in the peaceful uses of space.

This long standing, time tested and multifaceted bilateral engagement is the firm base on which can be built the edifice of a deeper and more diversified economic cooperation of the future. We need to make concerted efforts to reinvigorate our economic cooperation and integrate it with market forces. While the political responsibility for expanding ties with other countries is the primary task of governments, business to business relations have become a critical element in the overall architecture of interaction between countries in this age of increasingly de-regulated economies, private sector dynamism and globalization.

Our bilateral trade has so far largely been conducted within the framework of rupee-ruble arrangements but it is moving towards and it will soon be a fully market

determined phenomenon. We are currently working on an agreement to permit the utilization of the remaining rupee debt for Russian investments in India. I am hopeful this matter will be finalized shortly. This will put the ball in the court of Indian and Russian businessmen to identify and seize the opportunities for expanding trade and economic cooperation. While the governments will act as facilitators the business community will have to occupy the center stage. Our bilateral trade level of \$ 1.9 billion, according to our figures, does not correspond with the potential of the economies of the two countries and our strategic partnership in other key areas.

Both governments are acutely conscious of this anomaly. There is need to not only stem the decline in trade in traditional items like tea, tobacco, textiles and leather but to also expand the trade basket to include value added items in areas of applied technologies, information technology, telecommunications, automobile components, gems and jewellery and energy. With our vast resource base and intellectual capital, India and Russia should jointly explore avenues for generating and meeting demands on a regional and global basis.

Banking and financial sectors can provide the necessary framework for growth in bilateral trade. It will also provide the necessary element of confidence to the business communities. The opening of branches and representative offices of banks in each other's country is a positive development. The increase in exposure limits and extension of Lines of Credit also provides the necessary instruments for boosting trade. Joint financing of Indo-Russian projects and development of correspondent relations between financial institutions are the directions for future growth.

Indian and Russian economies have natural areas of synergy. India is ready to share its experience and expertise in setting up Information Technology parks. Besides Russia can import IT products directly from India rather than via Europe. President Putin's visit to Bangalore in November 2004 put into sharp focus the possibilities of cooperation in the IT sector. Now it is upto the business communities to seize the initiative.

The energy sector is a key area of interest. While production has begun in Sakhalin-I, we are keen to diversify our engagement in this sector. Russia's position as the world's second largest producer of energy and India's growing demand for energy resources spells out a natural complementarity between us in this sector. The dialogue between ONGC, GAIL, Rosneft and Gazprom is gradually gaining momentum and we hope to see concrete results soon. The oil and gas companies of India and Russia should consider expanding their joint operations to third countries.

Our government is placing special emphasis on infrastructure development- both urban and rural infrastructure. We have launched ambitious projects for building and upgradation of highways, ports and airport facilities and building of new metros. More Russian firms, with expertise in the relevant areas, must participate in projects in India.

At the 11th session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation held recently in Moscow, both sides noted that the dynamic growth of the Indian and Russian economies opened up a wide range of opportunities for bilateral trade and economic cooperation. They took cognizance of the need to step up the modest volume of bilateral trade. Specific sectors were

identified, including telecommunications, information technology, electronics, space, biotechnology, nanotechnology, machinery and equipment, aviation, ship building, tourism, metallurgy, oil and gas, hydro and thermal power, coal, civil nuclear energy and other infrastructure and high tech sectors. Cooperation in these areas can be stepped up through joint efforts. The group also called for early finalization and signing of a liberalized visa regime. Early conclusion of such an agreement will help develop commercial contacts between the two countries. Nevertheless, it is essential that Russian and Indian businessmen maintain a regular dialogue to seize emerging opportunities and identify projects for expanding their operations.

India-Russia economic cooperation has extended to the multilateral fora. Both countries support strengthening of rule based, non-discriminatory multilateral institutions and in that context India supports accession of Russia to the WTO.

India and Russia have developed unique bonds of friendship and cooperation over many decades. Our shared political perspectives, convergence of strategic interests and our cultural affinities have been the foundation stones of our strategic partnership. A multifaceted economic partnership will underpin more securely our traditionally close relationship. The role of the business community to build a stable and strong economic partnership is very important.

I wish your deliberations every success.

**Opening Remarks by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at Joint Press  
Interaction with President Putin.**

Moscow

December 6, 2005.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh: Mr. President, you have our deep appreciation for the warm welcome that has been extended to me and the Indian Delegation. We now have a well-established practice of annual Summit level meetings. The last six months have also witnessed an unprecedented exchange of visits between our two countries including those by the President of India and the Chairperson of the UPA Smt. Gandhi. My visit has been preceded by the meetings of the Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation as well as the Joint Commission on Military Technical Cooperation, which we view as two important pillars of our relations.

I am happy to convey that discussions with President Putin today were extremely useful and productive. Our strategic partnership with Russia is characterized by trust and mutual confidence. Personally, I greatly value President Putin's own commitment to the consolidation of our bilateral relations. Our strategic partnership is based on a deep and abiding convergence of our vital national interests. This is a strong impetus for India and Russia to work together on key issues of the day.

I conveyed to President Putin that we cannot be satisfied with the status quo. Our objective is to anticipate what measures we need to take to meet new and emerging opportunities for further strengthening of our strategic partnership, in meeting our respective national priorities as well as in pooling of our efforts in sharing global responsibilities.

India and Russia are large economies, experiencing rapid economic growth. There is thus vast potential for expanding our trade and economic relations even as we integrate with and take advantage of the opportunities offered by globalization. It is with this forward looking perspective that we have agreed to set up a Joint Study Group to examine the feasibility of a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between our two countries. I have assured President Putin of India's support for Russia's accession to WTO. The bilateral Accession Agreement will be concluded at the earliest.

My senior colleague and Defence Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Moscow for the Joint Commission for Military Technical Cooperation which met in Moscow last month. A comprehensive review was undertaken of our longstanding relations with Russia which occupies a special place as the leading supplier of military hardware to our Armed Forces. Our perspective, however, is to move towards collaborative projects involving design, development and production of the next generation military products. India and Russia have identified the Medium Range Transport Aircraft and the Fifth Generation Aircraft as two such projects, and we will continue expert level discussions on them. We are happy that the long awaited IPR Agreement on Military-Technical Cooperation has been concluded today.

We see energy security as an area of tremendous potential. India has made its most important overseas investment in the Sakhalin-I project, which has already come on stream. We are looking at other joint projects in Russia. The Kudankulam Nuclear Power Station in Tamil Nadu, which is being constructed with Russian assistance will be commissioned in 2007-08. We see Russia as a vital partner in furthering the objective of full civil nuclear cooperation between India and the international

community. We feel that there is vast potential for the expansion of cooperation in this area, given India's growing energy requirements and the importance of nuclear energy as a clean and viable alternative energy source.

Our discussion on regional and international issues demonstrated once again a meeting of minds. We have a common objection of creating an international equilibrium based on a just and equitable world order. There is hardly an international issue whose solution can be found without Russia's active involvement and contribution. This is a tribute to President Putin's leadership of this great country. I would like to thank him once again for his personal commitment for promotion of relations with India.

I have invited President Putin to visit India and I am happy to state that he has accepted this invitation.

**Speech by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at the Banquet Hosted by  
President Putin in Moscow.**

Moscow

December 6, 2005

Thank you for your warm welcome and words of sincere friendship. My wife and I are truly honoured and happy to be here. It is a privilege to experience the warm hospitality and affection of the most generous First Couple of Russia. To be among cherished friends is always heartwarming. Mr. President, I fully reciprocate the warm sentiments that you have expressed today. We in India value your friendship and regard.

Fifty years ago, our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited this great city and laid the foundation of an abiding friendship – a friendship based on mutual trust and confidence. Today on that foundation stands an impressive edifice. Today we share an even stronger bond. We admire your far-sighted and committed leadership in reinforcing this structure and thank you for the personal attention you have devoted to the rejuvenation and deepening of this relationship. I am convinced that we will find even greater convergence in our efforts as we move forward. I have no hesitation in saying that communication between our two great nations has never been so clear and lively.

It is fitting to recall the crucial assistance we received from Russia in India's emergence as a country with a fully developed industrial base. There is no significant sector of our national endeavour in which we have not benefited from Russia.

Today as before, Russia is a valued strategic partner. Our relationship has adapted very successfully and productively to current requirements. But what we will do together in partnership draws on the legacy of cooperating for mutual benefit. Our strategic relationship is based on political consensus in both countries. Despite the historic transformations underway in both countries, the essence of our partnership has not been diluted. The number of sectors of our cooperation has expanded and the terms of our interaction have evolved. The friendship our people bear for the Russian people endures.

We draw strength from the multi-cultural, and diverse character of our respective societies. These values and ideals allow us to understand each other's concerns and aspirations and encourage us to work together in multilateral forums in

pursuit of common objectives. We are united in our support for a multi-polar world, and in our resolve to root out the menace of international terrorism.

Our economic prosperity and mutual interest lie in closer partnership in trade, investment, joint research and development, in taking full advantage of the opportunities available in an increasingly inter-connected and globalized world. Energy security is a priority area for future cooperation, as are the frontier areas of science.

I am confident our cooperation in the coming year will be another significant landmark in the history of our bilateral relations, taking our traditional friendship to greater heights.

I request you to join me in a toast to:

- the health and well-being of Their Excellencies the President and First Lady of the Russian Federation;
- the further strengthening of the multi faceted cooperation between India and Russia;
- and
- everlasting friendship between our two countries and peoples.

Source: *Strategic Digest*, Vol.36, No. 1, January 2006, pp. 18-26.

## **APPENDIX – IV**

### **External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh's Visit to Russia**

Statement on Arrival

Moscow

October 27, 2005.

I am delighted to be back in Moscow. I was graciously received by President Putin today at his Novo Ogorovo Dacha Residence. We discussed the priority areas of our relationship and the progress registered to be made on important issues by the time of the next Indo-Russian Summit in early December. We shared satisfaction at our long-standing excellent political ties. We also briefly touched upon some economic matters of immediate relevance in the context of our overall strategic partnership. Earlier today, I visited MGIMO to address the faculty and students there on "India-Russia: Partnership in the new millennium". The young student community, many of them future Russian diplomats, was quite enthusiastic on the future of Indo-Russian relations.

Yesterday I co-chaired the 11th session of our economic Inter-Governmental Commission with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Zhukov. It was a comprehensive discussion covering a wide range of bilateral trade and economic matters. The current trade turnover remains much below potential. DPM Zhukov and I emphasized the role of the Commission in promoting economic engagement to mutual benefit. In the post-1991 period, Indo-Russian economic relations have been greatly transformed. The economic reforms have obviously enhanced the role of the business sector in this relationship. However, the two governments remain keen in actively facilitating

contacts and creating conditions for closer interaction aimed at greater trade and investments. While traditional areas require further impetus, we have identified some new areas for substantive joint action, like information technology, biotechnology, commercialization of Russian or jointly developed technologies and some frontier areas of S&T. There is shared commitment to moving forward in these fields. Some important specific issues include Russia's entry into WTO which we support and we are making progress. We are also actively determining ways and means to utilize the residual Rupee debt for investments in projects in India and Russia. Expert level negotiations are currently underway. We jointly hope that this would add to the basis for further steps on the economic side. Energy security is yet another area of great promise. The reasons are obvious.

Russia is one of the largest producers of oil and gas, and India is a rapidly growing energy market. There is close interaction at the inter-governmental and company to company levels in this field. While Indian participation in Sakhalin-I has demonstrated our joint capabilities and mutuality of interests, we are fully prepared with our technical and financial resources to expand our presence in the Russian energy sector. We hope that energy cooperation would emerge as a strong pillar of our strategic partnership. Civilian nuclear energy, military-technical cooperation and space are other priority areas for continued high level attention.

Yesterday I also attended the meeting of the Council of HOGs of SCO. Within SCO, we are ready to actively participate in cooperation in areas such as counter-terrorism, fight against illegal drugs, disaster management as well as in the economic field, including energy and transportation. On the sidelines, I had the opportunity to

also interact with Chinese PM Wen Jiabao and Iranian First Vice President Mr. Parviz Dawoodi.

I am meeting Foreign Minister Lavrov tomorrow.

Our Prime Minister is visiting Russia in December this year for the next annual Summit.

**“India - Russia: A Partnership for the New Millennium”:  
Speech by K. Natwar Singh at Moscow State Institute of International Relations.**

October 27, 2005

Ambassador Anatoly Torkunov, Rector of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Distinguished Faculty, scholars and students, Ladies and gentlemen,

I am indeed grateful to you for inviting me to your prestigious Institute which has, over the years, acquired the reputation of being the most outstanding institution in Russia for preparing diplomats and specialists in international relations. I believe my distinguished Russian colleague, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, is also an alumnus of this Institute.

I have learnt that MGIMO not only trains diplomats but also does research in and teaches courses in history, economics, law, culture, literature and foreign languages. Your Institute is thus self-contained to produce fully equipped specialists ready to join the world of international diplomacy. The world today faces a number of complex problems and new challenges. To deal with them, we need well equipped and more specialized diplomatic professionals with a more comprehensive understanding

of international relations. I congratulate the leadership and the teaching community of MGIMO for setting high goals in this field and achieving them.

I speak today on “India- Russia: A Partnership for the New Millennium”. But I cannot do that without recalling that the foundation of our relations was laid almost a century ago. I would like to go back to the visit of Pandit Nehru to Russia in 1927. He had come here with his father Motilal Nehru to attend the tenth anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution. Whatever judgement history may reserve of the past, on that three-day visit Pandit Nehru was impressed by the role of the State in the modernization of a country and in assuming social responsibilities, a philosophy which guided his leadership of independent India.

The year 2005 marks the 50th anniversary of the first visit of Pandit Nehru to the Soviet Union as Prime Minister. Mrs. Indira Gandhi visited Russia no less than ten times and Rajiv Gandhi maintained the tradition of regular contacts at the highest levels. Your country has been a staunch friend of India all these years, contributing to the development of many key sectors of the Indian economy, particularly in the field of heavy industry and proved that “a true friend is someone who walks in when the whole world walks out”. This rich legacy of long-standing cooperation served our two countries immensely when we began to redefine our relations in 1991 after the emergence of Russia as a successor to the Soviet Union.

Relations between India and Russia are today best described as a Strategic Partnership, a much used and therefore devalued term, but in our case expressing a solid reality. We are strategic partners because our national interests coincide in many substantive ways. The international situation has changed beyond recognition since the

end of the Cold War but our relations have remained steady and stable. There is no other example of two large countries with dis-similar history, culture and traditions, language and religion as well as ethnic composition maintaining such cordial understanding and such community of interest for so long. This is so because there is a national consensus in both countries that strong friendship and cooperation is in our mutual, long-term interest. Yet, even a strong relationship needs to be nurtured as international relations are dynamic in nature and a constant consolidation and expansion of ties is a necessity. For that a key pre-requisite is regular dialogue. We have done very well in this regard. Since the year 2000 we have had regular annual summit level meetings between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Russia. In the last one year we have had a number of high level visits.

President Putin made a successful visit to India in December last year. Our Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh visited Moscow on May 9 for the 60th anniversary celebrations of the end of the 2nd World War. The President of India Dr APJ Abdul Kalam paid a state visit to Russia later in the same month. At the invitation of President Putin, UPA Chairperson Mrs Sonia Gandhi visited Russia in June this year. Our Prime Minister and President Putin have met each other on two more occasions this year on the margins of multilateral events. The Russian Defence Minister has just returned from India where he attended a major Indo-Russian military exercise. The Head of Russia's Security Council was in India last week. Our own Defence Minister is coming here next month. I have now been to Russia three times in the last few months, for the trilateral India-Russia-China meeting at Vladivostok, for Mrs. Sonia Gandhi's visit and now for the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade and Economic Development.

Our dialogue is substantive as it covers besides bilateral relations, several issues of global concern. The existing world order is a transitional one between the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a new order that is just, fair and equitable based on international law and respect for sovereign countries, big or small. Cooperative multipolarity should be the foundation of such an order. The United Nations, which reflects multilateralism, needs to be reformed, including the Security Council, to make it in tune with contemporary global realities. Short term considerations and rivalries should not stand in the way of the crucial longer term need for reform in order to strengthen multilateralism on which there is a global consensus. We are grateful for Russia's continued support for India's candidature for permanent membership of the restructured Security Council.

There is no doubt that international terrorism has become a matter of grave concern to the international community. But even now the approach is sometimes selective and self-centered, an unwillingness to recognize that the networks of terrorism are interlinked globally. It is like an octopus with many tentacles and cutting off only some does not eliminate the dangerous core. For over two decades India has suffered from terrorism supported by external forces. Russia too has suffered grievously from the menace. We cooperate both bilaterally and internationally in the fight against terrorism. We share the approach that it must be fought collectively, resolutely and consistently, without any double standards. Our Foreign Ministry level bilateral Working Group on Countering International Terrorism has been a useful instrument for cooperation. There is a strong need to establish an effective international legal basis to deal with terrorism, with universal application. In this context, India and Russia have worked together on two major Conventions. We

welcome the adoption earlier this year of the Russian-sponsored International Convention on Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. We now look forward to an early adoption of the India-sponsored draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. It is a matter of urgent collective responsibility.

The threat to international peace and stability from weapons of mass destruction has acquired a new edge with the use of the phenomenon of terrorism. India has always been strongly in favour of non-proliferation and has worked actively, inside and outside the United Nations, especially during the Cold War against the spread of nuclear weapons. Unlike some countries, India has scrupulously prevented the spread of nuclear technologies for strategic, political, economic or ideological reasons. India is a rational and responsible nuclear weapon state. India exercised its nuclear weapons option because of its own strategic compulsions, faced with the enduring reality of nuclear weapons in our neighbourhood. Our weapon capability is not directed against any country or countries. In our strategic vision it is a weapon of credible and effective deterrence. India also adheres to the principle of 'No First Use'.

The peaceful uses of nuclear energy, primarily for electricity generation, remains crucial to economic and social development of many countries, including India. It can provide environmentally sustainable energy security. The need for ensuring access to nuclear technologies and materials for peaceful purposes is, therefore, as important as preventing proliferation of sensitive technologies and materials. With increasing uncertainties about supplies of natural gas and oil, nuclear energy is becoming more and more important. We are firmly convinced that expansion of our nuclear power industry is critical to our development. Given our impeccable record on non-proliferation, international cooperation for the development of our

civilian nuclear energy sector should be extended without any fear of undermining the global non-proliferation regime.

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy is an area of strategic importance in relations between India and Russia. Two Nuclear Power Plant units of 1000 MW each are under construction with Russian assistance at Kudankulam in India. While steps are being taken in India to further expand our own nuclear energy generation capabilities, international cooperation remains important. It is India's expectation that regimes like the Nuclear Suppliers Group would show a better appreciation of India's non-proliferation record and its genuine energy requirements. India is keen to expand cooperation with Russia in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Our own dialogue with the United States on the subject has led to a far reaching change in their attitude and countries like Britain and Canada have also signaled willingness to open the door for nuclear energy cooperation with India.

India's economy has consistently registered impressive growth rates in recent years so has the Russian economy. There is no reason for our bilateral economic relations to remain stagnant. What stands out in our overall partnership is that while our political relations are on a very firm and solid footing, the economic aspect is weak. The present level of our trade and economic cooperation is far from the true potential of our two economies. Our economic relations should be made into an important pillar of our strategic partnership.

The Inter-Governmental Commission to promote bilateral trade and economic cooperation is an important vehicle to comprehensively discuss the entire gamut of our economic engagement. I co-chaired the Commission meeting yesterday with Deputy

Prime Minister Zhukov. We hope that our joint efforts would yield concrete results in the coming months. As a new initiative, we are also planning to set up a Joint Study Group for exploring the feasibility of concluding a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA).

While we should continue to jointly explore practical measures to enhance India's traditional exports such as tobacco, tea, coffee and textiles to Russia, there is also the need to focus on new areas on both sides. India's capabilities in Information Technologies and Biotechnology are considerable. It is possible to combine Indian and Russian strengths in these areas to mutual advantage.

Strengthening inter-banking cooperation is a priority in order to promote trade and investment. Indian banks have begun to establish themselves here and we would welcome Russian banks in India. We are close to extending the scope of utilization of rupee debt funds to include investment by Russian companies in projects in India.

We should work on improved transport linkages between our countries in the years ahead. The North-South international transport corridor is of particular significance as it can greatly reduce transit time and shipping costs.

I would stress the need to strengthen business to business interaction between our two countries. The information gap that currently exists between us can be filled by greater contact on the ground, especially as we are moving away from State directed trade to the dynamics of the market. Both sides should remove hurdles that stand in the way of such contacts and, I would, mention in particular the need to facilitate the grant of visas to our businessmen.

Russia is among the world's leading producers and suppliers of oil and gas. India is one of the largest and fastest growing markets for energy. You have the resources, we have the need. It should not, therefore, be difficult to work together in the area of bilateral energy security, particularly in the context of Russian G-8 presidency with energy security as a main theme at the G-8 St. Petersburg Summit 2006. India's investment in Sakhalin-I demonstrates our willingness and capacity to make large investments in Russia's energy sector. There is an intensive bilateral dialogue already underway both at the government and company to company level and we hope that concrete progress will be registered in the months ahead. There are prospects also for bilateral cooperation through participation of Russian oil & gas companies in India's energy sector as well as working together in oil and gas projects in third countries, not to mention Russian participation in pipeline projects in our region which we would welcome.

Our long-standing defence cooperation underpins the strategic nature of our ties. A major part of the inventories of the armed forces of India is of Russian origin. Our defence cooperation is essentially based on India's legitimate security requirements and is not directed against any country. Our acquisition in recent years of the aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov, T-90 tanks, frigates and Sukhoi-30 aircraft marks a consolidation of our defence ties. We should, in coming years, move forward from a mere buyer/seller relationship to technology transfer as well as joint design, development, production and marketing. The outstanding example of the application of this approach is the Brahmos Missile developed by an Indo-Russian joint venture.

Cooperation in Science & Technology holds great promise in the years ahead. The Integrated Long Term Programme is our largest S&T international cooperation

programme with any country. We should now look at joint research projects in the frontier areas of biotechnology, information technology and nanotechnology as a special initiative in the field of science and technology. A major goal of our S&T cooperation should be the commercialisation of Russian technologies or those developed through joint effort. It has recently been agreed to set up a jointly funded Indo-Russian Technology Centre in Moscow for commercialisation of technologies.

Peaceful exploitation and use of outer Space is a traditionally important area of our cooperation. Our first generation space satellites in the 70's and 80's were launched from a Soviet facility. India has since developed its own launch capabilities. Russian cryogenic engines were an important element in our Geo-Stationary Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) programme. India has made significant progress in satellite technology and satellite applications. India's participation in Russia's Glonass satellite navigation system is of particular importance. During his visit to Moscow in May this year, our President proposed the joint development of a youth satellite for educational purposes. This would be an imaginative initiative to implement with the Moscow State University as a partner.

It always strikes me how positive a role culture can play in cementing ties between countries at the popular level when I meet Russian friends, they recall with fondness and nostalgia the Indian films they saw when they were young. There is deep interest all over Russia in Indian music and dance, literature, language, philosophy and in special areas such as Yoga and Ayurveda. A few weeks ago, "Days of India in Russia" were successfully held in Moscow and three other Russian cities. I have been told that the events found resonance among Russian audiences. This is very encouraging. Similarly, there is great interest in Russian arts in India and perhaps the

public feels a little deprived, in recent years, of the pleasure of witnessing superb Russian classical and folk dances and Russian circuses. Our two countries have agreed to celebrate the Year of Russia in India in 2008 and the Year of India in Russia in 2009.

I wish to conclude by saying that this millennium holds great promise for a burgeoning India-Russia relationship. The opportunities and challenges before us in the years ahead are many and we can mutually reinforce each other in dealing with them. Our friendship has been tested over five decades and we cooperate with each other willingly, freely, without pressure and in enlightened self-interest. Russia has stood by us in difficult times and so has India stood by Russia. As India grows stronger, it can become an even better partner as our interests are compatible. I am convinced that the further strengthening of our partnership would serve as a significant factor in promoting peace, security and stability regionally and globally.

Thank you.

**Statement after IRIGC Meeting,**

Moscow

October 26, 2005

We have just concluded the 11th session of our bilateral Inter-Governmental Commission. The five Working Groups of the IRIGC have met over the past year and their deliberations were reviewed in today's session. Deputy Prime Minister Zhukov and I exchanged our assessments on the working of the Commission to make it even more effective and result-oriented. The composition of our two delegations is a good

indication of the interest on both sides to deepen and expand our trade and economic cooperation in all its aspects. We recognize that while our political ties are excellent, the relationship on the economic side needs new impetus to match up to the immense potential that remains untapped. This is also a subject that has received constant attention at the highest political level.

Our two economies are consistently growing, offering new opportunities on both sides. We believe that business-to-business contacts will play an increasingly important role. However, the role of our two governments remains significant to make concrete and visible progress. We are developing the traditional areas of our long-standing economic engagement. At the same time, some new areas having great contemporary relevance in Indo-Russian partnership deserve greater substantive joint action. Such areas include information technology, biotechnology, commercialization of Russian or jointly developed technologies and some frontier areas of S&T. The results would no doubt be to mutual benefit.

As regards some specific areas, we have made progress on Russia's entry into WTO which we strongly support. We are actively discussing the issue of utilization of Rupee debt funds for investments in projects in India and Russia.

An important area that holds great promise in the India-Russia context is energy security. Russia is one of the largest producers of oil and gas, and India is a rapidly growing energy market. A lot of work has already been done at the inter-governmental and company-to-company levels. We need to go beyond our large investment in Sakhalin 1. India is technically equipped and financially capable and willing to jointly work with Russia to make our energy cooperation an important and mutually beneficial dimension of our strategic partnership. This is a high priority field

and, we expect concrete results in the near future.

Cooperation in banking and transportation sectors needs to be further strengthened in order to sustain and accelerate progress in trade and investments. In a normal and healthy economic relationship there is no substitute for direct and regular business-to-business contacts. We are actively encouraging this trend. An early conclusion of our agreement on business visa facilitation will go a long way in effectively promoting this aspect.

Our Prime Minister is visiting Russia in December this year for the next annual Summit. It is our hope that the many initiatives taken in the last one year under the IRIGC will converge towards a successful conclusion by the time of the December summit.

Source: *Strategic Digest*, Vol. 35, No. 11, November 2005, pp. 1472-1479.

## **Appendix – V**

### **Joint Statement on the Visit of the President of India Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to the Russian Federation.**

May 26, 2005

At the invitation of the President of the Russian Federation Mr Vladimir V. Putin, the President of India Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam paid a State visit to the Russian Federation on May 22-25, 2005.

During the visit, the President of India held detailed discussions with the President of the Russian Federation. The President of India also met the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Mr Mikhail Fradkov, and Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation Mr Boris Gryzlov, and also visited Saint Petersburg on May 25, 2005 where he met the Governor of Saint Petersburg Mme Valentina Matvienko. During the visit, the President of India also visited the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow State University, Sukhoi Design Bureau and NPO Mashinostroyenia. While in St. Petersburg, the President of India visited Laser Technology Institute and Arctic and Antarctica Research Institute.

The President of the Republic of India and the President of the Russian Federation discussed a broad range of issues of bilateral cooperation. They also exchanged views on regional and international developments of mutual interest. The two leaders emphasised that the traditionally close and friendly relations between India and the Russian Federation were characterized by stability and continuity, based on deep mutual trust, understanding and warmth. They expressed satisfaction that Indo-Russian relationship had successfully withstood the test of time. Both Sides

noted that the strategic partnership between them served their long-term national interests, provided the impetus to enhance their multifaceted bilateral cooperation and contributed to regional and international peace and security. It was noted that the views of the two countries on most international issues were identical or similar. Assessing India as an important member of the international community, the Russian Federation reaffirmed its support to India as a deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

The President of India and the President of the Russian Federation noted with satisfaction that intensive contacts between the two countries at highest political, inter-agency and other levels were being maintained. The fruitful practice of holding annual bilateral summits between the two countries and the role this played in the consolidation and expansion of their strategic ties was noted with appreciation. At the meetings, they reviewed the progress in the implementation of agreements reached during the official visit of the President of the Russian Federation Mt Vladimir V. Putin to India in December 2004. They expressed satisfaction at the existing wide ranging bilateral ties, including in key areas such as science and technology, peaceful uses of atomic energy and outer space and defence. They agreed that the potential to further deepen cooperation in these areas would be realized through joint efforts. They also exchanged views on new promising areas for the expansion of their bilateral cooperation. The visit of the President of India has become a new major step at the highest level to the progressive consolidation of Indo-Russian strategic partnership.

Source: *Strategic Digest*, Vol. 35, No. 6, June 2005, pp. 714-715.

## APPENDIX – VI

### **India-Russia Bilateral Consultations on Strategic Stability and Disarmament.**

New Delhi

January 28, 2005.

India and The Russian Federation held Bilateral Consultations on Strategic Stability and Disarmament in New Delhi on January 28, 2005.

2. The Indian delegation for the Consultations was led by Ms. Meera Shankar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and the Russian delegation was led by Mr. Sergei Kislyak, Deputy Foreign Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Russian Federation. The two delegations comprised of representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs as well as other relevant Ministries.

3. Affirming their commitment to further develop and enhance their bilateral strategic partnership, both sides exchanged perceptions and assessments on issues of regional and international security. They agreed on the need for working towards the goal of a more cooperative, consensual and a multi-polar security order. The two sides decided to continue the dialogue and the Russian side offered to host the next round of talks in Moscow.

4. Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak also called on Shri Shyam Saran, Foreign Secretary during his stay in New Delhi.

Source: *Strategic Digest*, Vol.35, No. 2, February 2005, p. 184.

## **APPENDIX – VII**

### **Russia-India**

#### **Joint Declaration by the Russian Federation and the Republic of India**

New Delhi

December 3, 2004

The Russian Federation and the Republic of India, hereinafter referred to as the Sides,  
Guided by mutual trust and respect inherent in bilateral relations,  
Drawing upon their wide ranging tradition of cooperation since the establishment of  
diplomatic relations in April 1947,  
Recalling the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of India  
and the Russian Federation of 28 January 1993,  
Reaffirming the Declaration on Strategic Partnership between the Republic of India  
and the Russian Federation of 3 October 2000,  
Convinced of the mutual desire to promote global peace and progress, and the need to  
counter challenges arising out of international terrorism,  
Confirm their adherence to the common ideals of secularism, democracy, rule of law,  
cultural diversity and pluralism,  
Affirm their commitment to develop further and enhance the strategic partnership  
based on nation-wide consensus in both the States,  
Declare as follows;

#### **I**

India and Russia, as two of the largest democracies in the world, are deeply committed  
to the establishment of a more democratic world order, based on a multi-polar world,  
which takes into account the major changes that have taken place in the international

political landscape over the past few decades. The two Sides note with satisfaction that the strategic partnership between them serves their long-term national interests, strengthens bilateral relations, deepens mutually beneficial cooperation and contributes to international peace and security.

The Sides agree to intensify exchanges in bilateral relations at the political and parliamentary levels, between the Security Councils and at official level. The significant degree of convergence in the overall perspective as well as interests of the two sides, have enabled Indo-Russian relations to withstand the test of time. Both sides recognize that their cooperation strengthens strategic stability in Asia and the world as a whole.

The Sides propose to continue consultations at all levels between the foreign ministries of the two countries, including those on disarmament as well as on the United Nations issues. Priority attention will be paid to coordination of efforts through the Joint Working Group on Combating Global Challenges and the Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism.

The Indian Side regards Russia as a major and fully active member of the international community, and as a country whose voice commands respect and attention on issues of global concern. In this context, the Indian Side strongly supports the earliest possible accession of Russia to the World Trade Organisation. The Sides regard this support as an important demonstration of Indo-Russian relations of strategic partnership, and express their desire to develop, after the accession of Russia to the WTO, cooperation within that Organisation, based on the principles of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit.

The Sides are convinced that trade, culture and tourism promote economic cooperation, goodwill and people-to-people contacts between nations. The Sides stress

that the traditionally strong bilateral relations have rested on foundations of political, defence and economic exchanges of a substantial nature. In the current context, this process has to be carried forward and strengthened further. Mutual investments in industries, cooperation in IT and banking are some areas that offer a new scope.

Energy constitutes an important part of the bilateral relationship. Considering the expanding energy requirements of India, both Sides stress the need for employing resources that are environment-friendly and available in sufficient quantities. Nuclear power plants offer a pollution-free and substantial source of energy to provide for the sustainable development. Both Sides are determined to continue their cooperation in the field of nuclear energy, incorporating innovative technologies to ensure energy security, with due regard to their commitments to non-proliferation norms. The Sides also recognise the considerable scope for cooperation in the hydro-electric and thermal power sectors. Russia is a major exporter of oil and gas and India is emerging as a large consumer. The Sides affirm their desire to cooperate in development of new oil and gas fields and the means of their transportation in Russia, India and other countries. Both Sides agree to encourage and assist investments in the energy sector by Indian companies in Russia and those by Russian companies in this sector in India. The Sides view cooperation in energy as an area of priority attention in bilateral cooperation.

## II

The Sides agree that the 21st century presents new challenges. In a globalised world, there are inherent inter-linkages not only between countries, but also between issues. Both Sides recognise the indivisibility between security and prosperity in the present day world. They agree that the most effective way to address contemporary challenges is through multilateral approaches based on the widest possible international support.

Multi-lateralism is an instrument to work towards the objective of a multi-polar world. The UN system is at the centre of multi-lateralism. Both Sides agree to cooperate closely at the UN and in other international organizations. In 2005 the UN will be 60 years old. Both Sides emphasise the necessity of comprehensive reforms in the UN system so as to reflect both the enlarged membership in the UN and the contemporary realities. India and Russia emphasise that the expansion of the UN Security Council is an urgent imperative to make the Security Council more representative and effective. In this framework, the Russian Federation reiterates once again that it regards India as an influential and major member of the international community. The Russian Federation reaffirms its support to India as a deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership in an expanded UN Security Council.

### **III**

India and the Russian Federation reiterate their common resolve to fight terrorism. They reaffirm that global terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and condemned in the strongest terms all acts of terrorism irrespective of their motivation, whenever and by whomsoever committed. They underscore that there can be no justification for terrorism on any grounds, including ideological, religious, racial, ethnic or any other. They believe that the fight against terrorism has to be long-term, sustained and comprehensive. In this regard they emphasise the need for giving substance and credibility to the global fight against terrorism and avoid selective approaches and political expediency. With the recent targeting of open societies around the world, India and the Russian Federation as two large and influential democracies, have reasons to be concerned about the vulnerability of democracies to terrorist attacks, because terrorism exploits the strengths of democracies such as, the protection of

human rights, freedom of expression and movement.

Both countries welcome the unanimous adoption of the UN Security Council resolution 1566 [piloted by the Russian Federation]. Noting that it seeks to consider action against terrorists including sanctions and judicial action and aims at making the Counter Terrorism Committee more action-oriented, both countries decided to actively cooperate with each other in counter-terrorism efforts.

India and the Russian Federation re-emphasise the need for an early adoption by the General Assembly of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

#### **IV**

Both Sides reaffirm that proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their means of delivery and related materials, particularly the risk of their falling into the hands of terrorists constitutes a threat to international peace and security. They highlighted the need to prevent terrorists or those who harbour them from acquiring or developing WMD, their means of delivery and related materials. Both sides emphasised the necessity to further address this threat on national basis as well as through forward looking multilateral long term efforts by all partners against proliferation with the central role of the United Nations. As strategic partners India and Russia affirmed their commitment to cooperate bilaterally as well as through appropriate multilateral forum towards contributing to this objective.

Both Sides also reaffirm their commitment to support efforts to prevent the deployment of weapons in outer space while preserving it for peaceful and cooperative activities aimed at developmental benefits.

## V

The Sides note with satisfaction that the Trilateral Meetings at the Foreign Ministers level of India China and Russia have been taking place regularly. These meetings have been useful in promoting understanding and exploring areas of possible cooperation at a trilateral and at an international level. The Trilateral Meetings have also reflected a strong concern against terrorism anywhere and in any form. The Sides express their conviction in favour of progressive increase in the trilateral cooperation, which could also result in social and economic development amongst the three countries.

## VI

The Sides considered the situation in Central Asia and note that security and stability in that region coincides with the priorities of India and Russia for the region. Greater economic growth and democratic progress of the Central Asian States demand the respect for their freedom to choose the models of development and implementation of reforms.

## VII

The Sides express concern over continuing violence in Iraq and stressed the need for an intra Iraqi dialogue aimed at building national consensus on a new constitution and on restoring stability and security in the country. The Sides advocate strict compliance of the UN Security Council resolution 1546, particularly with regard to the interim timetable of political process stipulated by it with a view to facilitating the formation of a new, democratic Iraq. The Sides affirm their continuing interest in contributing to the reconstruction efforts in Iraq and urged a wider degree of international consultation in the ongoing peace efforts. The Sides believe that it would be in the interest of the international community to restore the efficacy of multilateral approaches in addressing situations such as the war in Iraq.

## VIII

The Sides support the objective of a lasting, just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab Israeli conflict, based on relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council. The sides encourage the resumption of peaceful negotiations as soon as possible in accordance with the Road Map worked out by the Quartet of international intermediaries and approved by the UN Security Council in its resolution 1515.

## IX

The Sides welcome the successful conclusion of the Presidential elections in Afghanistan and underline the importance of efforts at national reconciliation and unity. The Sides also look forward to conduct of the parliamentary elections as scheduled in April/May 2005. They express support for a strong, united, sovereign and independent Afghanistan and underline the importance of empowering the Central authority with indigenous security institutions.

The Sides reiterate their support for the reconstruction process in Afghanistan. The Sides express their concern at the continuing threat to security, especially in the South and Southeastern provinces and also over the continued increase in the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan and underlined the need for effective steps to counteract the drug and terrorist threats.

## X

The Russian Federation and the Republic of India are convinced that their bilateral cooperation in all forms, and their strategic partnership, contributes to the strengthening of the regional and global goodwill and cooperation. They are determined to further enhance in every possible way the relations of partnership and

closely interact on a bilateral and multilateral basis, with other states, regional and international forums.

Prime Minister of the  
Republic of India

President of the  
Russian Federation

Source: *Strategic Digest*, Vol. 34, No.12, December 2004, pp. 1691-1694.

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